



Turf Times



The newsletter from the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association

BI-Monthly Update November/December Volume 30, No. 5

[2001]

President's Message

By the time everyone receives this months Turf Times, the holiday season will be well under way. The Thanksgiving turkey should be nothing but a carcass for the dog to chew on by now. So let us give thanks to all who help make the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association possible.

Let me take a second to thank Jim Tollefson and Mike Allison for serving on the NMTMA Board these past few years. Their wisdom and knowledge will be tough to replace. It has been our pleasure serving with them. We would also like to welcome the new board members Jim Van Awerp and Steve Sump.

The NMTMA Board of Directors deserve a token of thanks for not running the association into the ground, yet still providing quality outings throughout the season. Wait until next year!!!

The venders of the industry always deserve a huge thank you for their support. Not only financially for our fundraising events, but it seems they were always there to help out when needed. We really don't believe all of you have the plague when you come to visit.

To all the golf course assistants, mechanics, and staff members who push us to the edge of insanity only to pull us back in the nick of time. Thanks for all your help and patience during one of the more difficult summers on record. Maybe next time you'll let us jump.

Kay Patrick...need I say more. We are truly grateful. We would be lost without you.

We raise our glasses in a toast to our spouses, family, friends and significant others. Congratulations! Another golf course maintenance cycle is complete. We thank you for keeping us on an even keel. Happy Holidays to everyone!!!



Green Side Up,

Daniel J. Bissonette

NMTMA Website in the Near Future

The Northern Michigan Turfgrass Managers Association is looking to have their own website up and running by the spring of 2002. The website is already developed and the information is being put in by the Website committee. Once you gain access to the site each member will be able to navigate through many point and click icons. Some of those links will be; Membership Directory, Turfgrass Links, Events, Job Referrals, a Bulletin Board, Membership Information, and a link to our newsletter on the web. The board feels that this will be a important tool for the present and the future. What did this cost the association to get this set up? Nothing. Gaslight Media of Petoskey volunteered to set this site up for us. Many thanks to Jodie Bissonette and her staff for taking on this project. This site will be seen by other clients that are interested in developing their own web site with Gaslight Media. You will be hearing more information as the progression of going live with the website nears.

The 72nd Annual Michigan Turfgrass Conference, January 21-24, 2002

GCSAA CEU Credits Now Available!

The Michigan Turfgrass Conference is just around the corner and there are several exciting developments for this year's conference. The biggest news this year is that we have entered into a partnership agreement with the GCSAA that enables us to provide GCSAA CEUs for some workshops at the conference. These are not external CEUs that have been available at past conferences. The GCSAA CEUs are only available by attending sessions at the national GCSAA Conference, the Michigan Turfgrass Conference, and the Florida Turfgrass Conference. There is no limit on the number of GCSAA CEUs that can be earned and they can be used toward obtaining certification and/or recertification.

There is a diversity of great workshops available this year at the conference. One workshop that is bound to fill up quickly is Leadership of Latino Employees in the Green Industry. This workshop is presented by the popular GCSAA instructor, Arturo Castro, and will provide insight into managing a Latino workforce.

The following workshops have been approved for GCSAA CEUs:

Fertilizing for Healthy Turf – Dr. Paul Rieke, .35 CEUs
Calculations for Pesticide and Fertilizer Applications – David Gilstrap, .60 CEUs
Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship School – Greg Lyman, .60 CEUs
Leadership of Latino Employees in the Green Industry – Arturo Castro, .60 CEUs
Electrical Troubleshooting of Irrigation Systems – John Eggleston, .35 CEUs
Irrigation Water Quality and Turf Performance – Clark Throssel, .35 CEUs
Bio-Products and Organics – Beth Guertal, .35 CEUs
Integrated Turf Health Management for Diseases – Mike Boehm, .35 CEUs
Turf Weeds – Biology, Control, and Management Options – Ron Calhoun, .35 CEUs
Financial Management for Superintendents – Ray Schmidgall, .35 CEUs
Diseases and Alleviating Turf Stress Problems – Joe Vargas, .35 CEUs

Please join us for this educationally packed week. The complete conference registration has been mailed. If you have not received your copy, please contact Kay Patrick at (517) 321-1660.

We look forward to seeing all of you at the conference in January!

Dr. Kevin W. Frank
Michigan Turfgrass Coordinator

Doug Johanningsmeier
Conference Co-Chair

Karen O'Dell
Conference Co-Chair

Lois Beck Passes Away

Lois Beck (wife of NMTMA member George Beck) died on Tuesday, November 20th.

Memorials may be given to the St. Patricks Building Fund or local florists

Flowers by Kevin 810-376-4600

Klee's 810-376-4440

Any further questions, please call me at the NMTMA office.

Thank you – Kay

Norman receives DSA from national association

Beulah- L. Andrew "Andy" Norman was honored with a Distinguished Service Award at a recent banquet of the National Association of County Agricultural Agent's 86th annual meeting and professional improvement conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

This award is presented to the top two percent of agents from each state with more than 10 years service in Extension.

Selection was made by Norman's peers in Michigan and endorsed by extension director, Maggie Bethal.

This year, 83 persons throughout the country were presented with the Distinguished Service Award, including three agents from Michigan.

Norman has served MSU Extension for 28 years with professional responsibilities in horticulture and natural resources.

His programs have focused on fruit production and marketing, land use, water quality, turfgrass and landscape maintenance.

His long term natural resource programs have had a positive impact on the environment quality in northern Michigan.

This work, combined with programs for horticulture producers and the green industry, has earned him awards and recognition from partners, both local and international.

Scotland's Yard Golf Course For Sale

Located in Walloon Lake, MI, this 9 hole, par 36 golf course with driving range is situated on 80 acres with the Bear River running through the property. All equipment is ready for spring startup. Many possibilities are available with this purchase. Sale comes with pro shop/snack bar, 3 bedroom/ 2 bath house with loft and a full basement, maintenance facility. Four building sites are situated along the property. This property has many options for the right buyer. **Please send all inquiries to:** Scott Kuhlman

P.O. Box 97
Springvale Rd.
Walloon Lake, MI 49796

Turf Mechanics/Technicians Wanted

For quite some time I have been interested in re-establishing the meetings that the area Turf Equipment Technicians/Golf Course Mechanics of the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association held in the past. I began working as a Golf Course Mechanic at Matheson Greens in 1993 and these meetings were held in various locations in Northern Lower Michigan. As someone just coming into turf equipment repair I learned a great deal from the individuals selected to speak as well as the other mechanics in attendance. I am not quite sure of the best approach to getting these meetings started again and would appreciate any suggestions you or the other members of the NMTMA may be willing to offer. I feel that the Northern Michigan golf community would benefit from the sharing of knowledge and ideas between the Technicians/Mechanics.

The meetings were held about every two months at locations which were generously provided by course owners, there was never any problem finding a place to hold the meetings since most of the mechanics were willing to go to the owners just to get the chance to show off "their shops". The mechanic from the sponsoring course would schedule speakers they felt were relative to our position, some of the topics presented were reel grinding, back lapping, and set-up, belts and hoses, diesel engine troubleshooting and repair, and electrical system troubleshooting and repair.

The presentations would generally last about four hours and would be followed by a lunch at the sponsoring course, after lunch some of the attendees would chose to play golf while others would adjourn to the maintenance facility for a tour and informal discussions. The lunch and golf were usually discounted or donated by the sponsoring facility and the speakers were from various commercial establishments such as Spartan Distributors, Valley Turf, Grand Traverse Rubber, and E Z Go of Michigan.

If anyone is interested in discussing this further I can be reached by telephone at 231-620-5673 or 231-587-0439 or by email at whughes@chartermi.net.

Again I would appreciate any and all suggestions and assistance in getting this program re-established.

Thank you for your time.

Bill Hughes

Turf Equipment Manager/Technician

The Chief and Hawk's Eye Golf Courses

5820 Shanty Creek Road

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1962 Foley Bedknife Grinder \$1000

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1982 Toro Greensmaster 3 (5400 hrs) \$1000

1991 Cushman Truckster (2950 hrs) \$1000

If you are interested, please call Dan at 231-535-2373

Michigan Room

This year the "Michigan Room" will be held at the Rosen Centre Hotel on **February 7, and 8 from 6pm to 10pm** at the Golf Course Superintendents Association's National Conference in Orlando, FL.

Your 2001-2002 Board of Directors and Committees

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Vice President.....	Steve Hammon
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Membership:	Tom Reed, Dan Hunt
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Education:	Craig Hoffman, Doug Kendziorski, Mike Normand
MTF Fundraiser:	Steve Hammon, Dan Bissonette, Jim VanAntwerp
NMTMA Fundraiser:	Dan Bissonette, Jim Bluck, Jim VanAntwerp
Environmental:	Craig Hoffman, Steve Hammon, Steve Sump

TURFGRASS PLOTS AT NORTHWEST MICHIGAN HORTICULTURAL RESEARCH STATION

By: Tom Reed Sr.

In the summer of 2000 I received a telephone call from Andy Norman the Michigan State University District Turfgrass Agent in charge of the Northwest Region of Michigan. Andy said he had met with the new turfgrass breeder, Assistant Professor Sulieman Bughrara from the Department of Crop and Soil Science of the University. Sulieman had expressed a strong desire to establish some turfgrass trials in Northwest Lower Michigan. Dr Bughrara stated that a National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP) Consumer / Commercial trial could be started if there was University controlled property for a trial. Andy suggested an excellent area would be the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station (NWMHRS) in Leelanau County. He contacted the station staff and got their approval for a trial site at the station. The station owned by the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Foundation, and leased to MSU, already serves

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Some Advantages of Pruning Trees & Shrubs in the Winter...

Especially for Oak Wilt Management

By David L. Roberts, Ph.D., Michigan State University Extension

Dormant pruning has many positive characteristics. From a business standpoint, it helps to keep our employees busy and earning revenue, often providing jobs year round, even after the busy warm season is done. Another benefit is that dormant pruning enables us to correct disease problems which would be more risky during the summer season. For example, it is very difficult to prune Fire blight from trees or shrubs during the highly infectious spring and early summer times without spreading the disease to other limbs or plants. During the winter, bacterial populations in cankered branches are lower and dormant, and hence, less likely to be transmitted via our pruning utensils. Oak Wilt has become a disease of major significance in Michigan because of the pruning connection; open wounds during the warm season attract insects which carry the deadly fungal spores. The red oaks and members of like family are often killed within a month or two after coming in contact with the Oak Wilt fungus while members of the white oak family may succumb in several years.

Oak Wilt Management Through Winter Pruning:

While many professional plant health care providers are aware of Oak Wilt and its potentially lethal effects on oaks in our landscapes, some are either unfamiliar with or ignore the potential for Oak Wilt. Pruning during the summer months can actually promote disease transmission and the development of disease epicenters which can then devastate stands of oaks. The mechanism of disease transmission is that insect vectors (primarily sap beetles, including picnic beetles) are attracted to wound sites, and they carry fungal spores from infected trees or dead logs to recently pruned trees.

When I first proposed that we need to cease pruning during the warm season, my comments were met with mixed reviews and even some controversial remarks. The fact is, we need to make sure our industry is providing services aimed at improving the health of plants and not aimed at their destruction. Luckily, some companies have instituted a winter pruning program, sometimes advertised through various ingenious avenues, aimed at Oak Wilt management as well as management of other diseases. I think these efforts are very worthwhile, and I have even been thanked on occasion with comments about how winter pruning has actually expanded their businesses.

What is the Best Time for Pruning Oaks?

From my perspective the safest and most appropriate time to prune oaks is dormant, from late October to early March. Obviously, this time will vary from year to year depending on weather conditions. During early March in 2000, experts in Minnesota reported picnic beetle activity on March 1st. During most years, we would not expect much if any picnic beetle activity during the first week of March or perhaps even through the entire month of March. It is wise to keep in mind that during freezing or near freezing conditions, transmission of Oak Wilt is almost impossible. Unusually warm climatic periods during dormancy may be conducive for Oak Wilt spread.

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I have often been asked why my recommendations are different from some others' recommendations which suggest only the cessation of pruning during April, May and June. Many of the oak trees being pruned are large, at least 100 years old and are in very prominent locations. They are simply irreplaceable. Although I am certain that the likelihood of Oak Wilt transmission declines sharply after the three primary months, most scientists admit that we do not understand all of the mechanisms or vectors of Oak Wilt. No one will admit that the transmission of Oak Wilt is impossible, for example, during the month of August. In a recently new USDA bulletin, the authors suggested that oak bark beetles may also transmit Oak Wilt. I believe it is smart to avoid any possibility of Oak Wilt by limiting our pruning period.

Sanitization and Pruning:

The Oak Wilt fungus could potentially be transmitted via pruning utensils because of the transfer of fungal material residing in saw dust or chips. This is especially true during the warm season when fungal growth is at its maximum. However, there is probably little chance of spreading Oak Wilt during the dormant season, but I'd still recommend sanitizing equipment between trees. There is probably no need to sanitize utensils between cuts on the same tree because the tree is either infected or it's not, and the transfer of the fungus between branches of the same tree will probably not greatly impact a tree already infected.

The Benefits of Pruning Oaks During the Dormant Season:

The occurrence of dead wood is a common reason to prune oaks. Unfortunately, I think in most instances it is not possible to prune dead wood without the exposure of live tissue - the reason why dead wood should be done dormant and not during the spring and summer months on oaks. Proper pruning of trees can make them more storm resistant as well, whether the storm threat is from ice damage or from high winds.

Land Use and Environmental Issues in Law

Michigan State University North offers RD 201: Land Use and Environmental Issues in Law. Spring Semester 2002 in Traverse City. As part of MSU's Applied Plant Science Program, Land Use and Environmental Issues in Law, a three credit course with non-credit option, will be taught by Dr. Christopher Grobbel on Monday evening from 6:30pm to 9:20pm, from January 7, 2002 through April 22, 2002 at the NMC university Center on Dendinos Drive, off Cass Road in Traverse City. This course will introduce students to the legal foundations of environmental protection and land use regulation in Michigan, and utilize local examples and issues to illuminate course concepts. Topics to be covered include the history of environmental regulation in the U.S.; balance of governmental powers; private property rights and the takings issue; toxics cleanup; underground storage tank management; property transfer and environmental liability; brownfield redevelopment; wetlands; citizen suits; surface water regulation; riparianism; land use regulation and development issues; inland lakes, streams, shorelines, dunes and soil erosion control, farmland preservation tools and techniques; the right to farm; and voluntary programs in environmental excellence.

MSU's Dr. Grobbel is a former Michigan Department of Environmental Quality enforcement specialist and environmental consultant, and has taught environmental and land use law and policy at MSU's main campus and through the University Center in Traverse City since 1991. For more information or to register for credit or non-credit participation (\$250.00 fee) in this course, please contact Mr. Andy Norman, MSU North, at 231-929-3902.

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as a research facility for Michigan State University and the Cherry and Fruit Industry and has the necessary laboratory space and equipment needed for research.

This was music to my ears since it has been nearly 40 years since the first turfgrass variety plots were planted in Northwest Michigan (the old plot site was at the Traverse City Country Club and was created by Dr. James Beard in May of 1963). This was an excellent opportunity to develop and provide scientifically based information to the turfgrass and landscape industries and to further their management objectives, while protecting the water and natural resources. Many new turfgrass varieties are being developed and commercialized each year for uses such as golf course putting greens, tees and fairways, home lawns, athletic fields and roadsides. Claims made about varieties, such as "drought tolerant", "disease resistant" or "lower growing height" may be substantiated by objective research.

It was discussed that the plots would demonstrate the performance of some commonly used and newly developed varieties and cultivars of bluegrass and tall fescue. The parameters for evaluation of the plots would include density, color, texture, and percentage of ground cover, pest problems and environmental stresses.

The Northwest Michigan trials would be developed by using NTEP evaluation standards with the assistance of Assistant Professor Sulieman Bughrara who is in charge of Turfgrass breeding and genetics for the MSU Crops and Soils Department, Tom Reed Sr. of Tri-Turf, Andy Norman District Turfgrass Agent and the MSU-NMC Plant Science Program students. Each trial area would consist of two plot areas with three replications in a plot. There would be two Kentucky Bluegrass plots irrigated and two Tall Fescue plots, one irrigated and the other non-irrigated.

All the planning being complete it was time to get started. In late September and early October 2000 the NTEP Kentucky Bluegrass Consumer trials at the NWMHRS were planted. Thirty bluegrass cultivars were planted and replicated three times for a total of ninety plots in the first plot area and ninety plots in the second plot area or a total of one hundred eighty plots. The two plot areas were fertilized with Country Club 10-18-18 starter fertilizer at a pound of phosphorus and potassium per 1000 square feet and covered with a white blanket made of a spun poly material and stapled to the ground for the winter. When mature each plot area will be cut at two different heights. A close mowing height of one half inch is under consideration to determine how bluegrass will hold up.

The thirty cultivars are Midnight, Baron, Eagleton, as standard entries. Brilliant, Kenblue, Unique, Serene, Moonlight, Blackstone, Rita, and Northstar from Turf Seed, Inc., Champagne and Alpine from Pickseed West, Absolute, Award, Impact, Liberator, NuGlade, Odyssey, Rugby II, Total Eclipse from Simplot Jacklin, Bordeaux, Baronie, Barttitia, Barris and Cabernet from Barenbrug Holland/USP, Limousine and Quantum Leap from Roberts Seed Company and Brooklawn and Boutique from Turf Merchants.

In the April of 2001 we got our first look at the plots after a harsh and long winter. They were showing sparse germination so we decided to leave the blankets on until the germination improved. By the first of May the weather warmed up enough to remove the blankets. The germination of the grass had been outperformed by weed germination. It was time to decide to kill the weeds or start over. After consulting with Sulieman Bughrara and Dr. James Beard it was decided to initiate an intensive weed control and fertilization program. We started with applying Lebanon Proscap 19-2-9 Confront alternating it with Country Club 10-18-18 starter fertilizers. The weeds started to go and the bluegrass got denser each week throughout the summer. By fall we had plots that were showing good density and were ready to be

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evaluated. The plots were cut three to four times a week at 1.5 inches in height with the use of the research station's rotary type mower. We feel this helped tremendously with the progress in density.

At this point mowing presented a problem. We needed to own our own mower and it would be better if it were a reel type mower. Andy enlisted the help of a Michigan State Alumni and friend Robert Adams. Bob called David Warm the owner of the now abandoned Matheson Greens golf course to see if he had a mower that had not been purchased from the equipment sale last fall. Dave came through for Bob with a Toro tri-plex reel type mower. Dave was asking \$5000.00 but offered it to Bob for \$3500.00.

Bob purchased the mower and asked that we split the cost with him. He donated \$1750.00 and we began the process of finding the remaining \$1750.00. Andy submitted a grant request to the Founders Society of the Michigan Turf Foundation to fund the remaining balance. As of this writing Andy has not heard from the Founders Society.

This fall it was decided to evaluate the plots even though they were not one hundred percent in density. This would help for looking at improvement of each cultivar next season. We enlisted the help of Dr. James Beard on October 22, 2001 to read all one hundred and eighty plots. Top ranking cultivars were Serene 7.3, Northstar 7.2, Baronie 6.9, Boutique 6.9, Unique 6.9, Bartitia 6.7, Brooklawn 6.7 and Total Eclipse 6.7.

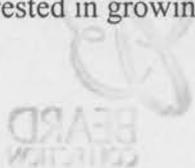
Also this fall a new Tall Fescue consumer trial was planted in late September and early October 2001. This trial consists of a group of thirty- two commercially available tall fescue cultivars plus several cultivars that will soon be released to the trade. The trial area consists of two plot areas similar to the bluegrass plots. One plot is irrigated and the second plot is non-irrigated different from the bluegrass plots. Tom Reed Sr., Andy Norman and the NMC Plant Science students worked in grading and seeding the plots. Tall Fescue has not been known to survive in the harsh winter weather. These plots were established to find cultivars that might dispel that notion.

The thirty- two plus cultivars and test number are: Bonsai, Kentucky 31, Jaguar, Rembrandt and Falcon II are the Standard Entries. Endeavor, Matador, Olympic Gold, Pure Gold, Tar Heel, Tomahawk RT, and Wolfpack are Turf-Seed, Inc. entries. Coyote, Wyatt, K01-E03, K01-E09, K01-WAF, K01-8007, and K01-8015 are entries of The Scott Seed Company. Picasso, and Masterpiece entries of Lebanon Turf. JT-7, JT-8, JT-14, JT-17, JT-19, JT-21, JT-22, J-23, JT-24, JT-25 and JT-26 are entries of J.R. Simplot Company.

We had Industry partners involved in helping to establish this entire project. Ground preparation was done with the donated help of the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Station, La Cross Landscaping of Cedar and GreenMan's Landscape Services of Traverse City. Irrigation was done with the donated help of S. White, Inc. and Lautner Irrigation of Traverse City, and Spartan Distributors of Sparta. Jacklin Seed, Inc., Lebanon Seaboard Corp., Barenbrug Seed, Inc., Sulieman Bughrara NTEP Partners and Tri-Turf donated Grass Seed. The fertilizer was donated, by Lebanon Seaboard and Tri -Turf. Robert Adams, an MSU Alumni and friend donated half the cost of the reel mower.

Long term plans are to collect all the research that the plots will yield and have it available for all people in the industry requiring this information especially Golf Course Superintendents, Athletic Field Turf Managers and Landscape Turf Managers interested in growing grass in Northern Michigan.

Tom Reed Sr.
TRI - TURF



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