

new jersey turfgrass association

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# clippings




Spring 2008 | VOL 69



*13 (Thirteen) is a Lucky Number for the Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic* Page 6...





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# President's Message

*by Dr. Karen Plumley, NJTA President*

As any high school science student knows, momentum is the product of mass times velocity. In other words, how much momentum a body has is a product of how large it is multiplied by how fast it's moving. Increasing a body's size or its speed or both increases its momentum.

As current events this year have shown, having momentum can mean the difference between being victorious and being an also-ran. You certainly want to be the one who has the momentum and it appears NJTA has it.

As has been previously discussed in this feature, NJTA has been going through a period of introspection these past few years.

How can NJTA better serve its members?

How can we provide even more support to Rutgers?

How can we continue to grow in the 21st century?

In short, how can we increase our momentum?

Through our newsletter, we've communicated how we're moving forward on all of these fronts, but as an example of our increased momentum, the one that really stands out is the Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic (presented by the New Jersey Turfgrass Foundation).

What began as just an idea back in 1994 has grown into an extremely successful event to raise funds to support the Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science. Even in a jittery economic climate, we had a full slate of golfers and record numbers of corporate sponsors at the 13th Annual Rutgers Golf Classic held at Fiddler's Elbow Country Club on May 5.

This event wouldn't happen without the dedication of our Golf Classic Committee, chaired by Shaun Barry and Rick Krok and comprised of a large number of hard working individuals who give unselfishly of their time to make this event an outstanding success.

The Golf Classic Committee may be one of NJTA's most popular committee assignments. Shaun and Rick always find something that can be contributed by everyone who steps forward to volunteer.

Ever increasing their size, their speed, their momentum.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Clippings

President's Message	3
From the Executive Director	4
2008 NJTA Patrons	4
Stacy A. Bonos Receives Large Grant	5
13th Annual Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic a Lucky Number!	6
Snapshots from a Great Golf Classic!	9
Buy-A-Bricks Installed	10
LPGA at Upper Montclair CC	14
NJTA's Hall of Fame Award	16
Rutgers County Extension Office Contact List	17
Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Days	18
Field Days Registration Form	19
Calendar of Events	23
<b>Green World</b>	
Evaluation of N Fertilization Effects on Anthracnose Disease of Annual Bluegrass	20



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[www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)



# Partnerships...

Partnerships come in all sizes and shapes and they make this industry work and work well.

What I have learned in my first year as the Executive Director of NJTA is a drop in the proverbial bucket of what else there is to learn about the turf industry.

I've seen how the allied associations join with the NJTA to develop strategic partnerships for small meetings, bigger events, sponsorships, participation, and more.

I've seen the courtesy extended to NJTA by these associations to bring positive action for the greater good of the whole industry. From sharing mailing lists to promoting to their individual memberships to selflessly volunteering to help and share the workload... and so many more unheralded things -- both members and suppliers alike give and keep giving.

The NJTA was formed with the mission to promote the Turfgrass Industry and enhance the environment through education, professionalism, leadership and our partnership with Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Our alliances with the Sports Field Managers Association, the Golf Course Superintendents Association, the New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association, the Sod Growers Association, the Green Industry Council - we're all sitting at the same turf industry table to bring meaningful value to the green industry.

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*by Cece Peabody, MAT, CMP,*  
*NJTA Executive Director*

I have seen the mutual respect that industry partnerships create, and I must say that I am proud to be part of this industry. I see life and work through rose colored glasses and I have no trouble seeing the best in all.

The 13th Annual Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic is a perfect example of association members and suppliers partnering for the greater good of Rutgers and the research programs. Attendees come in from across the country to attend; sponsor companies also come from all over the country to contribute to the fundraising goals. This event is an amazing synergy and truly is testimony to partnerships working well.

Thank you from NJTA for your continued involvement...and to each member of the allied associations for their continued partnership.

I can't wait to see what other good partnerships are in store for this year!

*Cece Peabody*

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# Grant Received by Stacy A. Bonos

Stacy A. Bonos was awarded a grant from the Department of Agriculture and Department of Energy, Rural Development - Biomass Research and Development to develop a native grass breeding consortium to identify optimum biomass productivity and switchgrass performance to marginal land in 9 regions of the US. The award is for \$971,799.

The title of the grant is "US Native Grass Breeding Consortium to Identify Regional Optimum Biomass Productivity on Marginal Land."

The project involves 5 other switchgrass researchers besides Stacy from around the country -- Michael Casler, Arvid Boe, Calvin Ernst, Paul Adler, and John Armstrong. The group will be testing switchgrass cultivars and other native grass species in 9 different regions of the country in paired fields (prime farmland vs. marginal land) to determine the effect marginal soil has on biomass yield of native grasses for potential biofuel productions

For additional information, Stacy can be reached at:

Department of Plant Biology and Pathology  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
59 Dudley Road  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8520  
732-932-9711, Ext. 297  
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### Sport Turf

- Level 1** Fertility Test: Nutrients, pH, recommendations
- Level 2** Complete Test: Nutrients, pH, estimated CEC & cation saturation, soluble salt level, organic matter\* content, soil textural class
- Level 3** Sand Root Zone Test

\*Organic matter content would be determined by loss-on-ignition for golf course greens, as described by USGA guidelines.

For more information please call us at 732/932-9295, or visit us on the web at:

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[www.rcrc.rutgers.edu/services](http://www.rcrc.rutgers.edu/services)



# 13 (Thirteen) Is A Lucky Number for the Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic

by Shaun M. Barry

**A**t the end of last year's Classic, the committee met to discuss ways of improving upon what we knew was a very successful event. It was Michelle Rickard's last official chance to help the NJTA and it was **Cece Peabody's** first official major introduction to her responsibilities as Executive Director for this association. Michele had flown in from her new home in Colorado to help Cece get a better understanding of some of the things this position required. They bonded very nicely and they got a chance to say hello and good-bye to everyone who gathered at Fiddler's Elbow. It was a wonderful success and the committee knew that they were part of a very strong transition team. The goal we set was to make sure that we did everything that we could to not miss a beat and we achieved that goal.

We added more members to the tournament committee and this helped greatly during the many months and meetings that it took to get to May 5, 2008. **Bruce Clarke** and **Bill Meyer** once again agreed to a little friendly competition to see who could raise the most money in sponsorship for the fifth year in a row. Bill has been victorious each year of the challenge and he felt pretty comfortable with the outcome for this year. Once these gentlemen agree to get actively involved we know that we will be successful raising the funds needed to keep improving turfgrass research. Both have wonderful well-earned reputations and the industry knows that money given to them will benefit all in the future.

When the 13 Premier Sponsors who agreed to help were totaled, Bill had assumed a substantial lead but then all of the Eagle (3), Birdie (6) and Par sponsors (18) were added to the total along with the numerous Hole sponsors and Bruce was only \$4,500 short of pulling off the greatest upset since the "Miracle On Ice." I believe that 2009 will be the most spirited contest yet while retaining that "all in good fun" feel.

On the day of the event the entire tournament commit-

tee was there to help. **Rick Krok** arrived somewhere around 6:45 am so he could swing his clubs for the first time this year. The range wasn't open so when I arrived at 6:50 am he put his clubs back on the rack and we headed out together and placed the thank-you signs for all of the Premier Sponsors. **John Deere** was a new Premier Sponsor so their sign was a little late being made and a little late getting there. When it did arrive hopefully its size made up for its tardiness.

Around 9:00 am some of our Premier Sponsors arrived for the breakfast with Bill and Bruce. This was a new addition to the schedule and it worked out very well. **Dave McGhee** and **Fiddler's Elbow** donated this to us and I think we will try it again next year because it gives these sponsors a little extra time spent with their contacts at Rutgers. It might even inspire more companies to move up to this level of support.

**Matt Sweatlock** was an early arrival as usual and he and **Pedro Perdomo** directed traffic to keep the registration process flowing smoothly. Cece was totally prepared and the three locations had all of the forms and gifts necessary to function beautifully. **John Fitzgerald** took a break from making sales calls to help and then he headed back to the road just before the start of play. He and **Ron Luepke** moved from table to table assisting everyone's efforts but **Michelle Williams**, **Barbara Fitzgerald**, **Marlene Karasik** and all of the great Rutgers volunteers looked like they could handle this on their own.

While Bruce Clarke was making his brief welcoming remarks that come just before the start of play we were still registering people. The **Maxwell Turf** bus from Long Island made it in time with about three minutes to spare. Traffic can be tough any time of the day coming from their part of the world and we were just glad that all 8 of them made it safely. We added one final player as the carts were starting to roll out to the Forest Course and that got us to the magical 300 player number.

*continued on page 7*



## 13th Golf Classic -- Lucky Number

Dave McGhee had suggested that we try and put as many superintendents as possible onto the River course so they could see the many changes that had been made. Since the final wrap-up work was still being done they didn't have to imagine about the scope of this project. It was something that I know they enjoyed and I believe that it was a learning experience for others. Play moved very well on both the River and the Meadow courses. I think most players finished their rounds in slightly over 4 hours. The Forest Course took longer but part of it is that not everyone was playing a player friendly scramble. The teams that were competing for the Rutgers Cup play their own ball and this format does tend to take a little bit longer to finish.

When play did finish everyone had the chance to enjoy hors d'oeuvres and refreshments but most of all everyone seemed to savor the chance to visit with their friends. In some cases this is the only opportunity that these folks get to meet each year so their time was well spent. **Mike Fidanza, John Kaminski, Jim Murphy and Ned Lipman** were seen enjoying their time with **Stan Zontek, Dave Oatis** and the team from the USGA. We had 70 superintendents in attendance with **Matt Ceplo & Scott Niven** there as presidents of their associations and over half of the BOD from the GCSANJ were there. **John O'Keefe** was representing the GCSAA and **Todd Raisch** will host the Barclays in August but he made time to join us for this day. Philadelphia sent a team as usual and the LIGCSA couldn't make it but they sent in a wonderful donation. Every part of our industry was there and all felt at home.

At 6:30 pm everyone headed into the main dining room and the celebration continued inside. Bruce Clarke introduced **Dean Bob Goodman** who in turn introduced our special guest, **Mr. Bob Mulcahy**. Bob is the Athletic Director at Rutgers and he had some very interesting stories to tell. We then took time to thank Dave McGhee for all that he has done for us. The loudest and longest applause was when introduced Fiddler's head superintendent **Tom Breiner** and then **Bob Fellner, Mark Loos and**

**Gary Shupper** who are responsible for each individual course. Their courses really reflect the hard work that they and their crew put in on a daily basis.

Dinner was the next item on the agenda and this part of the day seemed to be as much fun as playing golf was. Everyone appears to have mastered this part of the day. During dinner the silent auction was going on and there were some wonderful items donated by companies and individuals. **Barbara Vydro** has retired and she was just there to help Rick Krok and **Pat Dolan** with the auction and she donated a couple items. She doesn't get paid for her help and there she is donating to the cause. This is just another example of why I love this industry. The Yankee tickets that **MaryLou DesChamps** donates every year once again were a great hit. Mr. **Doug Heron** did get into a bidding war with another fellow for the Boston Red Sox tickets and in the end we set a record that may never be matched. The signed balls by Jeter and Rodriguez were donated by Dr Clarke and they were competing against a prized Curt Schilling ball given by **Greg Nicoll**. The first bid of minus \$5.00 on the Schilling ball (**Keith Kubik** said that was an offer from a Yankee fan but unfortunately he didn't get a good look at this fellow) did not reflect the amazing interest in this ball and the other two. When all of the numbers were added up we had reached a level that surpassed last year's record for the auction. Thanks to each donor and for everyone who takes the time to make a bid. You don't have to do this and we know it and we appreciate that you do.

As the evening was gently winding down we did get to announce the winners. In some cases teams were surprised that they won and others were surprised that they didn't win. A few years ago **Steve Chirip** and I decided that we needed to give all teams a chance to win. We devised a system of handicapping teams and this year we saw it work very well. These teams all had to play well enough to allow the handicap to make a difference. The handicap by itself wasn't enough to affect the outcome.



## 13th Annual Golf Classic

*continued from page 7*

On the River course **Joe Kinlin, Steve Craig, Brad Fox** (the trip to Ireland must have helped ) and **Gordon Kaufman III** won on a match of cards. All three winning teams shot a 61 which is really good play, Last year's winners came in second. They were **Rick Krok, Nancy DiRienzo, Mike Pastori and Grover Snyder**. **Brian Lescriner's** 3rd place team included **Rolf Strobel, Dan Tewes and Ken Mathis**. Taking top honors on the Meadow Course were **Reed Johnson, Ed Highland, Ryan Oliver and Darrell Marcinek**. Their 61 was two shots better then the score recorded by **Chuck Bergamo, Tom Jones, Matt Paulina and Shawn Reynolds**. Dr Meyer put together the team of **Rich Hurley, Kate Sweeney, Denise and Dirk Smith** and they teamed well enough to place third. On the Forest Course, NJTA Vice-President **Keith Kubik** (and known Yankee fan) blended shots with **Paul Dotti, Fred Riedel and Lance Rogers** to record the low team score of the day. They shot a 60. This score put them three shots ahead of the field. **Pat Dolan, Jim MacDonald, Mark Pittenger and Roger Schlobohm** came in second on another match of cards with **Brian Feldman, Roger Christenson, John Grasso and Shawn Flynn**.

The Rutgers Cup was donated by **Bayer ES** and it is an opportunity for the Premier Sponsors to enter only one of their teams into a gross competition. Each player plays his own ball without the benefit of the scramble format. The best gross score for each hole is the score that counts for the team. The team with the lowest score wins the cup. Due to a slight misunderstanding of the rules of play, we almost awarded the trophy to the wrong team. This was cleared-up immediately and the winners were once again the team from **Maxwell Turf**. The team consisted of **Doug Heron, Lynn O'Neill, Steve Rabideau and Sean Cain**. They shot a tournament record of 67 and hopefully will try and make it three in a row but if their bus hadn't made it on time the team from **Syngenta** would have won with a 68. Every team that entered was par or better so this was good play and good fun.

The longest drives from each course were hit

by **Andy Adams, Andy Kaler, Brian Feldman** (approximately 331 yards....), **Tom Moore**(twice), **Marie Pompei, Randy Rider and Denise Smith**. There were many great shots for a closest to the pin but the one hit by **Brian Minemier** actually flew into the hole. It was 100% inside the cup below the level of the green but it appears that it hit the liner and bounced out and away from the hole. **Matt Collins** hit the exact same shot and he also kicked away but he did stay close enough to win a prize. Joining Matt with a prize were **David Hayes, Rich Hurley** (twice), **Bob Jones, Tim Kerwin, Doug Larson, Ralph McGillian, John O'Keefe, Larry Pakkala, Mark Pittenger, Paul Ramina, Mike Scott and Mike Warner**.

The day ended like most of these events have done for the last 12 years. In the corner quietly discussing the Classic was a small group of dedicated people who always stay to the end to make sure they are there to help if needed. In addition to committee members were **Chris Carson** who is now the president of the NJTA Foundation and **Karen Plumley** who is the president of the NJTA. Chris and Karen only know how to help and they always try to do so as quietly as possible. These are two very talented people and they have really made a difference with their volunteer efforts. I could have included them in an earlier part of this summary but I wanted everyone to know that their contributions are right up there with Bill and Bruce. If you think of it please say thanks when you see them.

As we walked to our cars in the dark I couldn't get over how lucky we are that there are days like this when we can give something back to our industry. Not everybody can see the benefits of what Rutgers does but we do. Not everybody can see the importance of having 300 people play golf at a fundraiser but we do and as I was taking down the thank-you signs for each of our Premier sponsors, I was reminded that we can never say thank-you enough times to these companies and all of our sponsors. Your dedication and generosity is unmatched in the turf world and we all know that without your help none of this would ever be possible. We sincerely thank you and we look forward to many more years of our partnership for better turf and plant health through Rutgers research.



# SNAPSHOTS FROM A GREAT GOLF CLASSIC!

*Photos courtesy of Jerry Schoonmaker*



We thank our sponsors for their generous support!



# SNAPSHOTS FROM A GREAT GOLF CLASSIC!





# SNAPSHOTS FROM A GREAT GOLF CLASSIC!



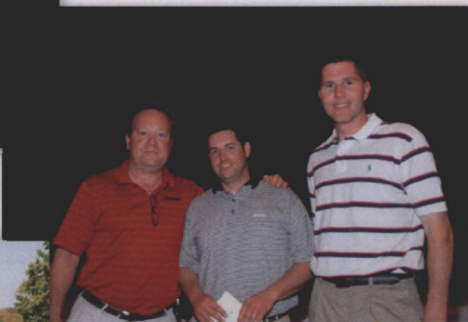


# THANK YOU BRUCE AND BILL!

*Photos courtesy of Jerry Schoonmaker*

Dr. Bruce Clarke (l) and Dr. William Meyer (r) are the inspirations behind the success of the Rutgers Turfgrass Research Golf Classic.

Thank you Bruce and Bill for all you do for this industry!






# BUY - A - BRICK INITIATIVE FOR NEW JERSEY TURFGRASS FOUNDATION



**Thom Ritchie**, NJTA Board Member, volunteers to place 15 new Buy a Bricks, a fundraising initiative of the New Jersey Turfgrass Foundation. The bricks are at Hort Farm II, right outside the Geiger Building.

*Photos courtesy of Shaun Barry.*





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# LPGA Sybase Classic at the Upper Montclair Country Club

Bob Dickison, CGCS, Superintendent at UMCC, and a past NTJA Board member, worked hard with his crew and lots of volunteers to make the course great for the ladies. In the midst of all the work, friends and staff remembered to celebrate "Red's" birthday.

*Photos courtesy of Jerry Schoonmaker.*

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More LPGA Sybase Classic Tournament preparations....



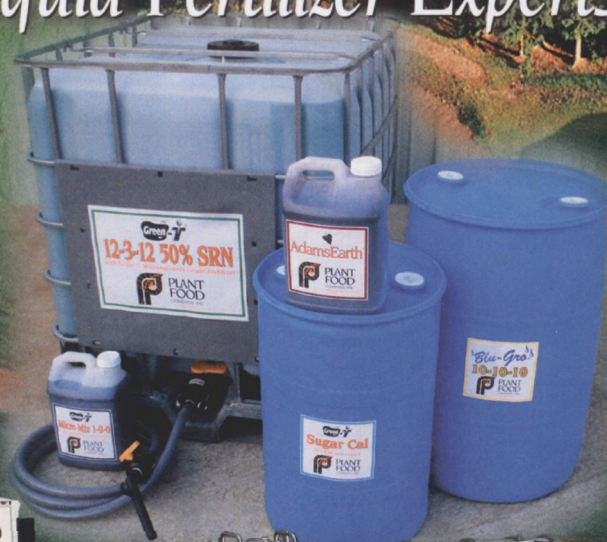
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# NJTA'S HALL OF FAME AWARD

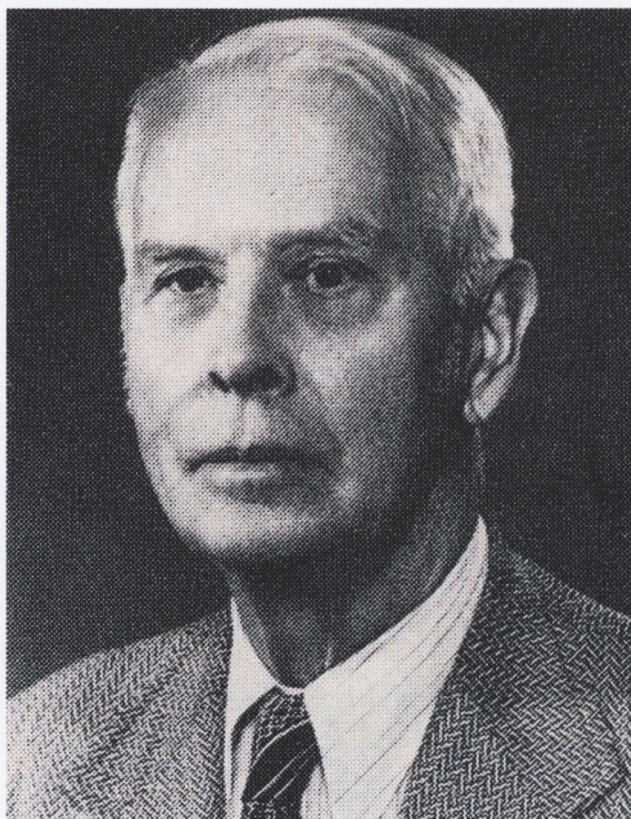
*by Keith Kubik*

The New Jersey Turfgrass Association's Hall of Fame Award is "presented annually to a person in recognition of a continuing lifetime commitment of dedication, service, and achievements contributing to the advancement of the turfgrass industry of New Jersey." This award was first given in 1974. As the NJTA nears our 40th anniversary in 2010, we felt it was appropriate to highlight the past winners of our highest award.

The following is a reprint from the "New Jersey Turfgrass Association 10th Anniversary Commemorative Book (1980).

## **Dr. Howard B. Sprague (1975)**

Dr. Sprague, native of Nebraska, received his Bachelors and Masters Degrees at the University of Nebraska. After receiving his Ph.D. in Agronomy at Rutgers University, he served as Agronomist and Chairman of the Agronomy Department at Rutgers. While serving as chairman, his leadership led to the establishment of a Turfgrass Management position in his department and he created a lasting enthusiasm for turfgrass science. After leaving Rutgers, Dr. Sprague served as agronomist with the United States Air Force. Following his association with the Air Force, he became director of the Texas Research Foundation. Later, he was appointed chairman of the Agronomy Department at Penn State University. After retirement, Dr. Sprague began serving as Agricultural Consultant with AID, which takes him to many foreign countries.



*Dr. Howard B. Sprague*



## Want to be included in the 2008 Member Directory?

Take this last chance  
to renew your 2008 membership with the  
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Take advantage of your member discount  
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RCE of Burlington County	(609) 265-2900
RCE of Camden County	(856) 566-2900
RCE of Cape May County	(609) 465-5115
RCE of Cumberland County	(856) 451-2800
RCE of Essex County	(973) 228-2210
RCE of Gloucester County	(856) 307-6450
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RCE of Somerset County	(908) 526-6293
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RCE of Union County	(908) 654-9854
RCE of Warren County	(908) 475-6505

*Please notify the NJTA office if any of the above  
numbers have changed. Thank you.  
973-812-6467*

## Rutgers Extension Offices & Numbers



# 2008 Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Days

by Pedro Perdomo

**T**he Rutgers Turfgrass Field Days are an important resource for the New Jersey Green Industry. The day is packed full of valuable information on new varieties, cultural management practices, and real world pest control options. The number of attendees reflects the value of this event and in the past few years hundreds of people have eagerly braved 100+ degree temperatures in order to listen to Stacy Bonos, Bruce Clarke, Steve Hart, Al. Koppenhofer, Bill Meyer, and Jim Murphy share a little wisdom. It is hard to leave the event without picking up a few ideas that can be used back at the job.

We are always looking to improve the experience for the attendees. We have adjusted the schedule to get the most out of the morning hours, with a 1:00 PM end of the event. We continue to work with the Sports Field Managers Association of New Jersey to bring the equipment trade show and demonstration to the Lawn, Landscape, and SportsField Day at Adelphia. These changes helped us see record breaking numbers last year. Our goal is to be even better this year and you may notice a few changes. The customary morning coffee will be upgraded to a continental breakfast so bring your appetites. We usually see several dozen attendees get to the Hort Farm for the Golf and Fine Turf Day extra early so this year we are offering an early bird core training session before the start of the day. This will be open to the first 80 attendees so you may want to leave home a few minutes earlier.

Thank you so much to all that have participated in the event in the past. Without your support these event would not be the great success that they are. Please join us this July 29 and 30 for the 2008 Rutgers Turfgrass Field Days and be part of another record breaking year. Use enclosed registration form or go to [www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org).





**\*\* Use This Registration Form and Sign Up Today!\*\***

## 2008 RUTGERS TURFGRASS RESEARCH FIELD DAYS

**FAX THIS FORM WITH CREDIT CARD OR PURCHASE ORDER TO (973) 812-6529**

### Golf and Fine Turf Day

**Tuesday, July 29, 2008**

Hort. Farm II - Ryder's Lane

North Brunswick, NJ

**\*\* No entry to Farm until 7:00 a.m. \*\***

Registration	7:30 a.m.
Early Bird Core Session	8:00 a.m. (1st 80)
Tours Begin	9:00 a.m.
Tours End	1:00 p.m.
Lunch	1:00 p.m.

### Lawn, Landscape & Sports Field Day

**Wednesday, July 30, 2008**

Adelphia Research Farm

Adelphia, NJ

**\*\*Vendors can arrive at 6:30 a.m.\*\***

Registration & Trade Show	7:30 a.m.
Tours & Demos Begin	9:00 a.m.
Tours & Demos End	1:00 p.m.
Lunch	1:00 p.m.

#### REGISTRATION Fee Each Day:

**Before 7/14/08\*\***

#### Association Member \*

**\$40**

#### Non-Member

**\$50**

On-Site or After 7/14/08

**\$55**

**\$65**

I am a member of: ☐NJTA ☐SFMANJ ☐GCSANJ ☐NJLCA ☐CSGA ☐NJNLA

\* This includes the following associations: New Jersey Turfgrass Assn, Sports Field Mgrs Assn of NJ, Golf Course Superintendents Assn of NJ, NJ Landscape Contractors Assn, Sod Growers Assn, NJ Nursery Landscape Assn. Membership is subject to verification.

**\*\*Registration must be received by 7/14/08 to receive the discounted rate.**

A separate fee will apply for each day, but those who wish to attend both sections may do so.

**Pesticide Recertification and GCSAA Education Credits Offered on Both Days!**

### DIRECTIONS

**ADELPHIA:** From the North - Rt. 18-South to Rt. 537 -West (Freehold Exit), continue for approx. one mile to the Kozlowski Road Exit (before second traffic light). Take the exit for Kozlowski Road and bear left to go to the ramp marked "Kozlowski Road South," follow that ramp onto Kozlowski Road. Continue through three traffic lights. Then continue over the overpass at Route 33 (BUSINESS). After the overpass, Kozlowski Road becomes Halls Mill Road, continue on Halls Mill Road through the traffic light at Willowbrook Road and cross over the overpass for the Route 33 (BYPASS). The Research Center is on the left, approx. 1/4 mile past the overpass for the Route 33 (BYPASS). From the South - NJ Turnpike to Exit 8. Follow Rt. 33 East to Rt. 33 BYPASS (NOT Business 33) to Halls Mill Road. Take exit for Halls Mill Road/Adelphia (before overpass bridge), continue onto Halls Mill Road. Research Farm is approx. 1/4 mile on left.

**HORT. FARM II:** Take the NJ Turnpike to Exit 9. Take Route 18-North to Route 1-South. Take the second Ryder's Lane exit toward Milltown. Move to your left immediately upon entering Ryder's Lane. Turn left at first break in the median and immediately turn right onto Indyk-Engel Way to parking area.

**Registration\*** [Register ONLINE at [www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail for Confirmation: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please Check Day(s) Attending:

- ☐ **Tues:** Golf & Fine Turf
- ☐ **Weds:** Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Field
- ☐ 2008 NJTA Membership \$75.00 (Individual)

**Payment: Total Amount Enclosed: \$** \_\_\_\_\_ \*All registration fees are non-refundable.

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Which Credit Card? ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ AmEx

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date (MM/YY): \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Account: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### NJTA Use Only:

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Member: NJTA: \_\_\_\_\_ SFMANJ: \_\_\_\_\_ GCSANJ: \_\_\_\_\_ NJLCA: \_\_\_\_\_ CSGA: \_\_\_\_\_ NJNLA: \_\_\_\_\_





## ► Evaluation of N Fertilization Effects on Anthracnose Disease of Annual Bluegrass

by James A. Murphy  
Bruce B. Clarke  
John C. Inguagiato  
Joseph A. Roberts

*Applied Turfgrass Research from Rutgers, the State University, and the New Jersey Turfgrass Association*

**A**nthracnose is a destructive disease of weakened or senescent turf caused by the fungus *Colletotrichum cereale*. The disease occurs throughout the United States, Canada, and Western Europe on almost all turfgrass species but is particularly severe on annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*). The frequency and severity of anthracnose outbreaks on golf course putting greens has increased over the past decade. It has been suggested that management practices commonly employed on golf courses may be enhancing abiotic stress and thus predisposing turf to anthracnose. And it is probable that more than one or combinations of management factors may be enhancing the severity of this disease, making it more difficult to control.

The overall goal of our project is to develop a set of best management practices (BMPs) for the control of anthracnose disease on annual bluegrass putting green turf. Although we have improved our understanding of how some cultural practices affect this disease, there remain critical questions regarding nitrogen (N) fertilization effects on anthracnose. Our previous research demonstrated the importance of N fertilization in minimizing anthracnose; however further evaluation is needed to determine the optimal frequency of summer soluble-N applications as well as the impact of late- and early-season granular-N fertilization programming on the severity of this disease.

### *Mid-season N Fertilization and Growth Regulation Effects on Anthracnose*

Our first trial evaluated the impact of N fertilization (0.1 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> every 7 or 28 days), mefluidide (Embark; 0 and 1.5 oz. a.i. acre<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>), trinexapac-ethyl (Primo; 0 and 0.7 oz. a.i. acre<sup>-1</sup> every 14 days), verticutting (VC; 0- and 0.12 inch depth every 14 days) and interactions of these factors on anthracnose of an

Silica sand was topdressed over the entire trial at 0.3 ft<sup>3</sup> 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> and incorporated with a cocoa mat drag every 14 days after VC treatment. Turf was irrigated as needed to prevent wilt stress. Dollar spot (*Sclerotinia homoeocarpa*) disease was preventatively controlled with vinclozolin or boscalid. Flutolanil was used to suppress brown patch (*Rhizoctonia solani*) every 14 days from June through August each year. These fungicides were previously found to provide no suppression of anthracnose on annual bluegrass in New Jersey. Annual bluegrass weevils (*Listronotus maculicollis*) were controlled with applications of chlorpyrifos, bendiocarb or bifenthrin.

Treatments were repeated in the same plot-locations each year. Factors included N fertilization, Embark, Primo, and VC. N treatments were 0.1 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> of N sprayed as an ammonium nitrate solution every 7 or 28 days from May to September 2003, October 2004, and August 2005. The entire experimental area was lightly irrigated immediately after N applications. Total N applied during the 7 and 28 days fertilization treatments was 2.2 and 0.6 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> in 2003, 2.4 and 0.5 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> in 2004, and 1.2 and 0.3 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> in 2005, respectively. Embark levels were either none or a split application of Embark at 0.76 oz. a.i. acre<sup>-1</sup> on 14 and 28 April 2003, 7 and 21 April 2004, and 6 and 20 April 2005. Primo levels were either none or Primo applied at 0.7 oz. a.i. acre<sup>-1</sup> every 14 days. Primo applications on non-Embark treated plots were made from 14 April to 16 September 2003, 7 April to 22 September 2004, and 6 April to 10 August 2005. VC levels were either none or VC to a 0.12 inch depth (actual) with 0.04 inch wide blades spaced 0.5 inch every 14 days from 30 May to 7 August 2003, 11 May to 25 August 2004, and 28 May to 5 August 2005.

*continued on page 21*



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# Green World



*Applied Turfgrass Research from Rutgers, the State University, and the New Jersey Turfgrass Association*

*continued from page 20*

The trial was inoculated with *C. cereale* (isolate ValP-04) at the initiation of the trial to ensure uniform disease development across the site; disease outbreaks occurred naturally in subsequent years. Anthracnose severity was assessed from June through August each year as the percent turf area infested.

N fertilization frequency had the greatest influence on disease throughout the trial; N applied at 0.1 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> every 7 days reduced damage 5 to 24% compared to a 28 days interval. Similarly, stalk rot of maize (*Zea mays* L.), caused by *C. graminicola*, can be reduced by increased N fertility throughout the season. Plant growth and maintenance requires relatively large amounts of N and N deficiency can inhibit growth, decrease photosynthesis and reduce tolerance to environmental stress, potentially increasing susceptibility to stress related diseases such as anthracnose. Specific mechanisms associated with reduced anthracnose severity in plants with greater N fertility are currently unknown, although increased plant vigor has been proposed.

Interactions involving N and Embark indicate that more frequent (7 days) N fertilization reduced anthracnose severity and negated any effect of Embark on disease. The plant growth regulators, Embark and Primo, frequently interacted during the last 2 years of the trial; sequential application of Embark and Primo reduced disease 6 to 14% compared to plots that only received one of these plant growth regulators. At advanced stages of disease, the combination of 7 days N fertilization and Embark and Primo application had the greatest disease reduction.

Over-stimulating annual bluegrass fairway turf with N has been reported to enhance disease development;

N applied at 6 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> increased anthracnose foliar blight compared to 3 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>. Additionally, researchers have observed greater disease when most N was applied during April and May rather than November regardless of total annual N applied. Rapid foliar growth induced by excessive spring N fertilization can deplete carbohydrate reserves, which would be exacerbated by low net photosynthesis during summer stress. Thus, our trial indicates that frequent low rate soluble-N fertilization during the middle of the growing season can dramatically reduce anthracnose severity on putting greens. And the work of other researchers on anthracnose foliar blight suggests that the annual N fertilization rate should be moderate (3 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>) and a greater proportion of the annual N fertilizer should be applied in autumn versus spring to reduce disease severity on fairways; however, this approach needs to be evaluated for anthracnose basal rot under putting green conditions.

### *Nitrogen Fertilization Programming Effects on Anthracnose Disease of Annual Bluegrass Putting Green Turf*

Our initial trial involving N fertilization indicated that frequent low rate soluble-N fertilization during the middle of the growing season can dramatically reduce anthracnose disease. However, this previous trial was not designed to determine an optimum frequency for soluble low rate N fertilization relative to the severity of anthracnose. Moreover, previous research has not clearly defined the possible role of late- or early-season higher N rate granular fertilization on anthracnose of annual bluegrass putting green turf. Nor has the influence of the timing of granular-N fertilization on the frequency of low rate soluble-N fertilization during the growing season been defined.

*continued on page 22*



# Nitrogen Effects...

*continued from page 21*

Superintendents have frequently asked about the potential role, if any, of late- and early-season granular-N fertilization in turfgrass management and are seeking guidance on the importance of this practice in suppressing anthracnose of annual bluegrass turf. Note that recent marketing of foliar (liquid) fertilization has been encouraging superintendents to reduce and possibly eliminate higher rate granular-N fertilization. This research should provide insight into the feasibility of this approach to N fertilizer programming with respect to disease management.

Therefore, our objectives in upcoming trials include:

1. identifying an optimum frequency for low rate soluble-N fertilization for suppressing anthracnose disease,
2. evaluating the N rate effect of late- or early-season granular fertilization on anthracnose disease severity, and
3. determining whether late- or early-season granular-N fertilization alters (interacts with) the effect of frequent low rate soluble-N fertilization during mid-season on anthracnose.

## *Objective 1.*

A water soluble-N fertilizer (ammonium nitrate) will be sprayed at 0.1 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> of N at frequencies of every 1, 2, 4 and 8 weeks or applied at 0.2 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup> at frequencies of every 2 and 4 weeks. The latter two treatments are included to determine if it is feasible to increase the interval between sprays (thereby reducing costs) by increasing the N rate, yet maintaining the same degree of disease suppression as the respective more frequent lower-rate N application. All six of these N treatments will be initiated in mid-May before disease becomes active and June once disease has become active. These two separate initiation dates will determine whether or not differing N levels in turf need to precede disease activity to ultimately suppress severity. Clippings will be collected at the same time that disease severity is assessed to determine the relationship of leaf tissue N content to disease severity. Results will confirm the range of treatment levels to be used in the soluble-N fertilization factor of the trials described below.

## *Objectives 2 and 3.*

Another annual bluegrass field trial area was established autumn 2007 to conduct a trial that will be repeated twice in space (Trials A and B). These experiments will be initiated in autumn of 2008. The first factor will be the season for granular fertilization: spring, autumn and none. The second factor will be the annual N rate of granular fertilization: 1.4, 2.8, 4.2, and 5.6 lb 1000-ft<sup>2</sup>. The third factor will be the frequency of low rate soluble-N fertilization during the growing season; for example, every week, every two weeks, every four weeks, and none, based on results from the trial addressing objective 1 above.

Trial A will be allowed to develop disease in 2009 while trial B will have disease suppressed with fungicides in 2009; disease will be allowed to progress on trial B in 2010. Trial B will provide a second year of data from plots that have received two years of cumulative N fertilization, which may result in some treatments having a buildup of soil N (residual) that could impact findings related to Objective 3. Trial A (disease allowed to develop in 2009) will include an additional year of treatments and data collection if turf can recover sufficiently from disease damage in the autumn of 2009.

**Acknowledgments** This work was supported by the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, State, and Hatch Act funds, Rutgers Center for Turfgrass Science, other grants, and gifts. Additional support was received from the Tri-State Turf Research Foundation, United States Golf Association, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, Golf Course Superintendents Association of New Jersey, and the New Jersey Turfgrass Foundation.

Healthy annual bluegrass tiller (left), next to an infested tiller (right) bearing acervuli on the crown and chlorotic (yellow) foliage.





# CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2008

JULY 29 & 30, 2008

## Rutgers Turfgrass Research Field Days

Tuesday, July 29th:  
Golf and Fine Turf

Wednesday, July 30th:  
Lawn, Landscape, and Sports Field Day

Registration Form Inside or  
Register Online @  
[www.njturfgrass.org](http://www.njturfgrass.org)

We look forward to seeing you there!

DECEMBER 9-11, 2008

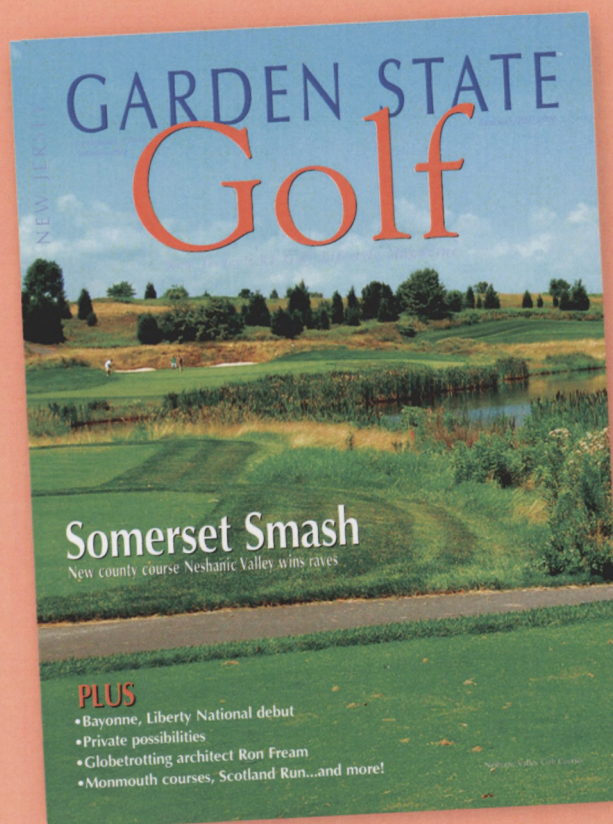
## 33rd Annual Green Expo Atlantic City NJ



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