

A GREEN SECTION RESEARCH PROJECT

NOW OPEN

The Turfgrass Information Center

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ARE YOU having trouble with tall fescue in your Kentucky bluegrass? Perhaps you should try chlor-sulfuron. Do you routinely syringe your bentgrass greens? Maybe it is not necessary. Is TGIF something more than an excuse for the weekend libation? It certainly is. The TGIF at Michigan State University is the USGA-sponsored Turfgrass Information File; it can provide information on these and other topics in turfgrass management and research.

In the spring of 1984, the USGA and Michigan State signed an agreement whereby the MSU Library would design and develop a bibliographic computer database to provide access to all published materials reporting the results of research that affects turfgrass and its maintenance. Such a project had top priority with the USGA Turfgrass Research Committee at its initial meeting, on March 1, 1982.

One of the principal reasons for locating the project at Michigan State University Library was the existence of the O.J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection, including books, journals, and conference proceedings. The collection was based on O. J. Noer's personal library and was supplemented by gifts from James Watson, Thomas Mascaro, James Gallagher, and others who had been solicited by Charles Wilson and James Latham, acting on the behalf of the O.J. Noer Foundation. Since its inception, the collection has grown and has become recognized as one of the best in the country. It made good sense to build the bibliographic project on an existing collection.

A private foundation, the United States Golf Association, and Michigan State University have come together to create the Turfgrass Information Center (TIC). The center will have three goals:



Part of the O. J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection. The past can be a key to the future.

The USGA Turfgrass Research Committee examines part of the O. J. Noer Memorial Turfgrass Collection, at Michigan State University, July, 1984. (Left to right) Dr. Richard E. Chapin, Dr. Paul E. Rieke, Dr. James R. Watson, Charles W. Smith, James B. Moncrief, Dr. Marvin Ferguson, members of the Committee.



(1) to develop and maintain the collection (Noer Foundation), (2) to provide computer access to the bibliographic data of turfgrass research (USGA), and (3) to deliver documents or copies from the collection to researchers, practitioners, and other appropriate users (MSU).

The librarian at TIC will devote whatever time is necessary to the acquisition of materials for the turfgrass collection. A network of researchers and practitioners in the field will be developed to assist in acquiring the variety of materials for the collection and for the automated bibliographic files. Preservation of the collection, including binding and microforming, will be undertaken.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC access to the collection is provided by the project's retrieval system, supplemented by appropriate printed reports. The library has purchased an Alpha Microsystems computer, and the STAR information program. The system was installed on August 8, 1984, and the data — the Turfgrass Information File (TGIF) — already has more than 3,000 abstracts.

All articles in the 30 or so technical journals and newsletters devoted specifically to turfgrass information (such as *California Turf Culture*, *Florida Turf*, *Golfdom*, *Ground Maintenance*, *Sports Turf Bulletin*, and USGA GREEN SECTION

RECORD) will be added to the file; the 15 or so scientific journals that publish primary research materials relating to turfgrass (such as *Agronomy Journal*, *Crop Science*, and *Plant Disease Reporter*) will be reviewed and appropriate articles will be added to the file; technical and scientific journals in allied areas (such as *Groundsman*, *Landscape Industry*, and *Park Maintenance*) will be reviewed regularly.

For now, the current journals are being abstracted and added. As time is available, journal articles back to January 1980, will be added, and additions from previous years will be reviewed with the USGA Turfgrass Research Committee.

Files and bibliographies of the National Agricultural Library, the Commonwealth Bureau of Great Britain, Biological Abstracts, and others will be reviewed monthly and searched for omissions and for other titles that do not usually report on turfgrass research. Articles so identified will be added to the file.

THE TGIF database can be searched in a variety of ways. For a basic subject search, the searcher can insert a term, and the computer will find records in which that term appears, as part of the title, as an assigned subject term, or in the abstract. For a more precise search, the searcher can restrict the search to

records in which the term appears in only one of these elements. One can also limit retrieval of records to only those by specific authors, from specific journals or proceedings within a particular year or range of years.

Progress in providing bibliographic access to collections has improved dramatically with the new technology; progress in providing physical access to collections remains much the same as it was when the first inter-library lending code was established. During the initial years of the USGA-MSU contract, the Turfgrass Information Center cannot be expected to provide physical access that is much more than the U.S. Mail and limited photocopies. In succeeding years we might expect facsimile transmission or full text retrieval and an electronic mail type of access for requests.

Michigan State University Library will provide loans and/or appropriate photocopies to all users who have reason to need access to the turfgrass collections. The objective is to respond to most requests within 48 hours.

Alpha Microsystems and Cuadra Associates, the developer of the STAR program, have developed new programs to permit access to the Alpha and the TGIF with the IBM personal computer or other computers compatible with the IBM. After this effort has been evaluated, the center will provide information to potential users on how to gain access to the collection.

ANOTHER possible computer service for the future is a turfgrass information exchange. The Information Center computer can support a bulletin board where telephone users could leave messages and ask questions of other users of the system. A caller could, for example, leave a message asking if anyone had advice concerning a certain disease.

Anyone now interested in a subject bibliography from the TGIF database should either call the center or mail his request. If mailing a request, please be as specific as possible about your subject. First, provide a paragraph or two describing what information is desired and why, and, second, provide a list of terms relevant to your request, including possible synonyms for the topics of interest.

Requests, questions or comments should be addressed to Turfgrass Information Center, W-212 Library, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich. 48824-1048. Phone requests should be made at (517) 353-7209.

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