

**Carmen Magro, CGCS
Instructor and Turfgrass Technical Coordinator
The Pennsylvania State University**

**2005 Progress Report for 2 Year Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program,
Research Facilities, and Media Relation Activities**

2005 was a transitional year for us here at Penn State. However, it did not hinder our progress in any way. I encourage you to view all of the research reports from our faculty which are posted at www.paturf.org. I would like to thank the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council for their cooperation in helping us educate the industry and provide reports for our ongoing progress.

As you can see, all of our faculty engaged in very useful research that will further help us understand and implement better management practices. From my own perspective, it was a tremendously busy year for all of us. Taking on the role of directing the Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program as well as coordinating our research and facility activities certainly is an ongoing challenge that I'm sure will remain extremely comprehensive. It is something I am enjoying tremendously. I am working with professionals that are leaders in their specific studies...and I get to help coordinate all of our work into efforts that will best help you in the industry.

We made some changes in the Two year program. You may not be aware of this but as of July 1, 2005, any graduate, past or present of the Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program will receive thirty Baccalaureate credits that can be applied toward a B.S. Turfgrass Science degree which can be completed on campus or by distant education through Penn State's World Campus. World Campus is not a replacement for the hands on training and continuous faculty contact you receive in the Two year program. We don't expect it ever to be.



PSU vs. MSU in Cutter Cup event held at Merion Golf Club East. PSU won 3 ½ to 1 ½ in stroke play!!

PSU World Campus is certainly a very good supplement to the training that one receives through our resident program. Thus, graduates learn the communication, technical, networking, and overall life skills, along with the fundamental and detailed management techniques needed to succeed in our industry of turfgrass management by attending the

Two year program. They can then go into the industry for an extended working season making them valuable assets to any facility. Furthermore, they can continue their studies online while gaining valuable work experience simultaneously. The reputation of our Two year technical program speaks for itself. Most importantly, we teach the students to think so that they are prepared to work through the infinite challenges they will encounter in their careers. I am committed to securing that reputation always, and I am always working to improve the value of our education. By having consistency in our faculty...those that teach the B.S. program also teach the Two year program which is truly unique and extremely valuable...we continue to have sound education while producing fine individuals continuing to be successful in the industry. We employed 100% of our graduates this past March while producing multiple Golf Course Superintendents, Assistant GC Superintendents and Sports Turf managers. At the conclusion of this academic year, we will have graduated more than 1,500 students from the Two year program. We are all certainly proud of that fact and are committed to producing many to follow.

Our facilities for research include the Joseph Valentine Turfgrass Research Center and the Landscape Management Resource Center which comprise seventeen and twenty-four acres of research plots and breeding grounds respectively. In 2005, I supervised the installation of a sub-ground irrigation system through 10 acres of ground to enhance our turfgrass breeding efforts so that we can continue our work in developing improved turfgrass varieties well into the future. Also constructed was a 14,000 square foot USGA specification putting green. Students from our 2006 graduating class of the Two year program participated in this work. We will use this facility for further research and recommendations for improved management of fine putting green surfaces. The green is being grown in this spring. As you can see from the research reports linked with this report, the facilities are being utilized very effectively and continuously.

With regard to our media relation efforts, I am proud to say that I have traveled the state, the country and beyond all in an effort to improve our understanding of the needs of the industry, to recruit students into our program, and to assist any way I can with the issues being faced day to day. I have taken some of our research efforts into the field and hope to continue to do so. I visited more than six dozen golf courses last season and I hope to achieve that level this year as well. Please do not hesitate to contact me should there be anything I can help you or your club with throughout the season.

I have been asked if I miss being a superintendent. Truly, I feel like I still am a superintendent. I can't allow myself to be detached from the industry...and I find myself volunteering to assist operations near and far...I think this would be my "fix." Training what will be the future leaders of our industry has satisfaction that I can't explain. As those of you who have gone through the program know, it is not until the end that you realize the value of what we put you through during the thirty-two weeks of training. For me, it is continued education. And this is most true when you consider that I am continuing with graduate studies. But the day you stop feeling like a student of this industry is the day you should retire...no matter what age that may be. This is a message that I try to instill in students from day one...and I hope they will never forget it. I will

always be a superintendent at heart and will continue to assist any way I can with improving facilities, operations, and the industry. Turfgrass Management and the Science that fuels it is an infectious passion...I'm proud to have it and happy to share it. Good luck with your 2006 season!

Please make an effort to attend this year's PSU Field Days being held Wednesday and Thursday August 9th and 10th. The Bar-B-Que event will be held at Beaver Stadium on Wednesday evening, August 9th with fun activities and tours taking place. Please bring your family along. Please visit the PTC website at www.paturf.org for further details. Thank you! cmagro@psu.edu