

# International Turfgrass

The Newsletter of the International Turfgrass Society

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## Successful Completion of the 15th ITRC: 426 Attendees from 26 Countries

by Shin Nakamura, Kunitsugu Ogawa, Satoru Tanaka & Hideaki Tonogi

ITRC2025 Executive Committee; International Relations Committee; Japanese Society of Turfgrass Science

The 15th International Turfgrass Research Conference (ITRC2025) was held at the Karuizawa Prince Hotel West in Karuizawa, Nagano, Japan, from 12–16 July 2025. This was the second time the conference had been hosted in Japan—the first being in Tokyo in 1989—marking a significant return after 36 years. Karuizawa, a well-known summer resort area with convenient access from central Tokyo, provided an ideal setting for this global gathering. The conference was organized by the Japanese Society of Turfgrass Science (JSTS) in association with the International Turfgrass Society (ITS).

A total of 426 participants from 26 countries attended the conference. The majority came from Japan (155) and the United States (147), followed by Australia (31), Canada (10), China (8), Italy (8), Germany (7), Spain (7), Denmark (6), Republic of Korea (5), and Sweden (5). This broad international participation reflects the global significance of turfgrass science and its expanding network of researchers and practitioners.

The 2025 conference promoted the principles of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognizing that companies must not only pursue financial success but also fulfill their responsibilities to society and the environment. Turfgrass-related industries that aligned with these values contributed to environmental improvement, enhanced their corporate reputation, and supported consumer choices that promote a healthy and sustainable future.



At ITRC2025, the combined knowledge of researchers and engineers from Japan and around the world was brought together to address current challenges and encourage collaboration among industry, government, and academia. The conference aimed to contribute to a greener and more vibrant society by maximizing the value of green space in living environments.

### Opening Ceremony & Keynote Address

The 15th International Turfgrass Research Conference (ITRC2025) kicked off on July 12 with remarks by ITRC2025 President, Mr. Tonogi. He expressed deep gratitude to all who supported the 12 years of preparation since 2013. Special thanks were extended to the Japan Turfgrass Society, the International Turfgrass Society, Prof. Tom Hsiang for his constant guidance, Prof. Doug Soldat as editor-in-chief, and Mr. Ogawa, who served as secretary-general and oversaw key preparations including entertainment. Mr. Tonogi also introduced the conference logo, created by Tokyo-based designer Ms. Rika Aono through a public competition. Inspired by the traditional noshi pattern, the logo symbolizes celebration and unity. Its concept highlights: (1) Academic research consolidation and future expansion. (2) Simplicity and strength, making turf and Japanese identity recognizable at a glance. (3) Symbolic colors—

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scarlet red (vitality and festivity), golden yellow (light and the future), and two greens (the turf's spread). He also encouraged participants to use the conference as a chance to exchange ideas globally and contribute to the future development of turfgrass science.



The following plenary session began with welcoming remarks and an address by Dr. Maria Strandberg, Past President of the International Turfgrass Society,

who emphasized the importance of international collaboration in achieving sustainable turfgrass systems. This was followed by three keynote presentations that provided historical, social, and scientific perspectives specific to Japan.



Mr. Shigeharu Yaguchi presented on the historical development of turfgrass culture in Japan, highlighting the country's evolving relationship

with green spaces. Dr. Kenichiro Fujisaki discussed the introduction and impact of turfgrass in Japanese schoolyards, illustrating its contribution to public well-being and educational environments. Dr. Ryo Akashi concluded the keynote series with a presentation on the genetic characteristics of Zoysia grass, providing insights from recent genomic studies that inform breeding and adaptation strategies. The session concluded with a moderated discussion led by Dr. Shoichi Kimura, with interpretation support from Mr. Nakamura, fostering an inclusive dialogue among participants from around the world. Together, these opening presentations provided a rich cultural and scientific context for the sessions that followed and set a collaborative tone for the entire conference.

### Practitioner Seminar

The Practitioner Seminar, held on July 13 as part of the 15th International Turfgrass Research Conference (ITRC2025), was designed to give Japanese turfgrass professionals an opportunity to experience the atmosphere of an international congress while gaining access to the latest global research findings. Planned by the conference organizing committee in

consultation with sponsoring companies, the seminar featured 21 presentations—17 from corporate and organizational sponsors and 4 keynote lectures from overseas university researchers—organized into four thematic categories:

- (1) Machinery, equipment, and materials
- (2) SDGs-related topics
- (3) Pesticides Part I
- (4) Pesticides Part II

In his opening address, ITRC2025 President Mr. Tonogi highlighted the seminar's role in reviewing the current state of turf management in Japan, introducing advanced global practices, and stimulating innovation among practitioners such as golf course



superintendents, groundskeepers, and turfgrass managers.

The seminar showcased many cutting-edge technologies, including innovative pesticides, IT-based solutions, autonomous mowing systems, real-time pest detection, organic matter management, high-precision application techniques, and pesticide-free disease control, etc. Many of these technologies were also presented in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in environmental stewardship and sustainable turf care.

Although keynote speakers Prof. Soldat and Dr. Paul Koch faced flight delays and could not attend in person, their lectures proceeded smoothly thanks to proxy presentations delivered by ITRC2025 President Mr. Tonogi and Prof. Hsiang (University of Guelph) using the authors' pre-submitted materials.

To ensure accessibility, all slides were prepared in both Japanese and English, with Japanese presentations also permitted. Overseas lecture materials were pre-translated by the organizing committee, and these bilingual efforts were well-

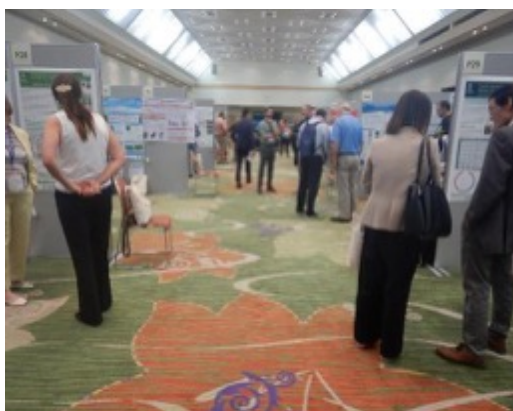
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received, fostering active participation from domestic attendees. While simultaneous interpretation during Q&A proved challenging at times, the overall response suggested that these measures effectively encouraged greater involvement from Japanese practitioners. The seminar attracted a large and engaged audience and played a vital role in bridging academic research and practical turf management, while also demonstrating how advanced technologies and innovative solutions can shape the future of the industry.



### Oral Session

A total of 73 presentations were delivered across eight thematic oral sessions held on July 13, 14, and 16. These included Turfgrass Diseases (Sessions 1 and 4; 10 and 5 presentations, respectively), Sustainable Maintenance and Soil Management (Session 3; 10 presentations), General Turfgrass Science (Session 5; 12 presentations), Turfgrass Insect and Nematode Issues (Session 6; 8 presentations), Turfgrass Breeding and Weed Science (Session 9; 11 presentations), Turfgrass Physiology (Session 12; 8 presentations), and Water and Nutrient Management (Session 13; 9 presentations). These sessions showcased diverse research directions and emerging innovations, particularly in sustainability, pest and disease management, and environmental resilience in turfgrass systems.



### Poster Session

The Poster Session featured a total of 83 presentations, held across July 13 and 14 in the KAEDE hall. Posters covered a wide range of turfgrass science, including turfgrass breeding and genetics, pest and disease management, environmental stress physiology, soil health, water and nutrient management, and sustainability practices. The session included contributions from universities, research institutes, and industry organizations representing multiple countries, reflecting the global scope of current turfgrass research. The poster format encouraged active dialogue between presenters and attendees, creating an engaging environment for technical exchange and networking. It also provided a valuable platform for early-career researchers and students to showcase ongoing work and receive feedback from the international turfgrass community. The strong diversity of topics and participation underscored the collaborative and interdisciplinary nature of turfgrass science today.

### Two Symposia

The first symposium, titled “The Future of Mowing,” took place on July 14 and was moderated by Prof. Scott McElroy. It consisted of eight sessions exploring advancements in mowing technology and their implications for turf management and sustainability. Presentations addressed topics such as robotic mowing systems, the ecological impacts of mowing frequency, digital transformation in golf course operations, and comparative studies between autonomous and conventional mowing. Discussions emphasized both environmental benefits and operational efficiencies, illustrating how automation is reshaping the future of turf maintenance.



The second symposium, “Zoysiagrass Symposium”, was held on July 16 and was facilitated by Dr. Micah Woods. It featured six sessions covering the use,

cultural significance, management, and breeding of *Zoysia* species, along with research on drought tolerance and digital breeding technologies. A panel discussion further highlighted collaborative efforts

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to improve resilience and performance across diverse environments. Together, these symposia provided an in-depth exploration of emerging trends and technologies, while fostering dialogue among researchers, practitioners, and industry partners worldwide.



### Graduate Student Oral Competition

The ITRC2025 program featured two Graduate Student Oral Competition sessions on July 14, providing a platform for emerging researchers to present their innovative work and gain academic recognition. A total of 25 presentations were delivered, organized into two themes: “Pest Management” and “Turfgrass Physiology, Breeding, and Management.”

The morning session concentrated on pest and disease control, highlighting advances in disease detection using digital tools, fungicide resistance, weed management, nonsynthetic herbicide strategies, and impacts of preemergence herbicides on non-target plants, etc. The afternoon session shifted to physiology and breeding, with studies on mowing regimes, rooting and drought responses, genetic diversity, nutrient leaching risks, alternative turfgrass species for overseeding, and cultural practices such as fraise mowing, etc. Together, the sessions demonstrated the scientific rigor, creativity, and global diversity of the next generation of turfgrass scientists, while reinforcing the conference’s commitment to mentoring and recognizing young talent. Awards for outstanding presentations were announced during the Closing Ceremony on July 16 as follows:

#### Pest Management Session

**1st Place:** Elisabeth Kitchin — Leveraging deep learning for dollar spot detection and quantification in turfgrass

**2nd Place:** Nikolay Minaev — Investigating the effects of preemergence herbicides on spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) growth in flowering turfgrass lawns

**3rd Place:** Suzannah Hale — Nonsynthetic herbicides for turfgrass: optimizing performance of acid- and oil-based chemicals via sequential treatment to dormant turfgrass

#### Turfgrass Physiology, Breeding, and Management Session

**1st Place:** Patrick McLoughlin — Risk of nutrient leaching following over-irrigation of two warm-season turfgrasses with recycled water

**2nd Place:** Will Green — Alternative cool-season turfgrass species for overseeding dormant bermudagrass

**3rd Place:** Maureen Kahiu — *Poa annua* control in golf course putting green collars via fraise mowing



### Field Tours

As part of the ITRC2025 program, a full-day Field Tour was held on July 15, providing participants with firsthand exposure to premier turfgrass management facilities as well as culturally and environmentally significant landmarks across the Kanto and Nagano regions of Japan. Initially designed with nine tour routes, the final program was streamlined to seven routes, taking into account the number of participants and optimizing logistical efficiency.

The tours reflected a broad spectrum of turfgrass applications, from elite sports facilities and golf courses to urban green spaces, cultural heritage sites, and natural landscapes, each offering unique insights into Japan’s regionally adapted turfgrass strategies. Key sites visited include:

- Tokyo Horse Racecourse (Fuchu, Tokyo): Tokyo Racecourse, managed by the Japan Racing Association (JRA), is recognized for its advanced turf management.

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Mr. Takayuki Asakawa, Chief of the Turf & Landscape Section, introduced the *Zoysia japonica* cultivar ‘Equiturf,’ developed by JRA for durability, and the overseeding of ryegrass ‘Tachiyuuka’ during dormancy. He also highlighted key practices such as mowing, drainage, renovation, and surface hardness monitoring. Although rain shortened the schedule, participants observed zoysia turf conditions and ongoing repair work, gaining valuable insights into racecourse turf management.

- Saitama Stadium 2002 (Saitama):



Saitama Stadium 2002, one of Japan’s largest soccer-specific venues and home to the Urawa Reds, hosted a field tour led by Head Groundskeeper Mr. Ryota Sato, Sub-Groundskeeper Mr. Atsushi Kitada, and former Groundskeeper Mr. Masataka Wajima. Participants learned about the contrasting management of the outdoor Bermudagrass (Tifway 419) training ground and the Kentucky bluegrass-based main pitch. The program was initiated with a special entrance onto the main pitch through the players’ tunnel, giving participants the chance to experience the atmosphere of professional football—a moment many greatly enjoyed. The tour also highlighted the 2022–23 full turf replacement of the main pitch, overseeding and divot repair practices, and advanced systems for soil temperature, irrigation, and drainage control. Sustainable management approaches—such as disease prevention, optimized pesticide use, and interseeding for density—were presented, reflecting insights from a 20-year study on temperature-controlled rootzone systems.

- Kumagaya Rugby Stadium (Saitama): Superintendent Mr. Tomonori Kodama, one of the few turf managers with experience in both the FIFA and Rugby World Cups, guided the tour of Kumagaya Rugby Stadium. Participants visited the main and secondary fields, observed turf conditions

and renovation work, and exchanged views on management practices such as mowing, fertilization, aeration, and pest control. The excellent field quality and Mr. Kodama’s professional guidance were highly appreciated.



- Nagano U Stadium (Nagano City, Nagano):



At Nagano U Stadium, Groundskeeper Mr. Shigeru Aoki introduced the stadium’s history, design, and turf management. The Kentucky bluegrass pitch is maintained with mowing, aeration, and supplemental lighting, while trials with the warm-season cultivar Tahoma 31 are underway to address summer stress and drainage issues. Participants engaged in active discussion on management practices, and the visit concluded with a tour of the adjacent Nagano Olympic Stadium, venue of the 1998 Winter Olympics ceremonies.

- Hidaka Country Club (Saitama):



Hidaka Country Club in Saitama Prefecture, established in 1961, features *Zoysia matrella* tees and fairways, *Zoysia japonica* roughs, and two

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creeping bentgrass greens. Active discussions focused on turf management practices such as bentgrass cultivars, fertilization, pest control,



mowing, renovation, and robotic mowing. Participants praised the excellent course conditions. Many purchased souvenirs at the clubhouse shop, and special thanks were extended to the management and

staff for their warm support.

- Asama Kogen Country Club (Nagano):

At the Asama Kogen Country Club, the superintendent Mr. Takayuki Ito welcomed the group and introduced the 18-hole, par-72 course, featuring *Zoysia japonica* fairways and ‘Pennncross’ bentgrass putting greens. With English interpretation by ITRC2025 President Mr. Tonogi, participants toured the course and observed turf management practices, including examining bentgrass root depth. The visit, carefully coordinated by the Country Club and the ITRC2025 Organizing Committee, proceeded smoothly despite the golf players on the course.

- Sania Park Sugadaira (Ueda City, Nagano):



Sania Park Sugadaira, a highland sports complex and historic rugby training center, hosts about 1,000 matches annually. The busiest ground is used up to six times a day for soccer or three for rugby. Despite wind and rain, participants discussed turf management with interpretation by ITRC Committee member, Dr. Tanaka. Large patch-like symptoms were seen on untreated turf but tended to disappear after play.

- Saitama Bonsai Museum (Saitama):



A cultural site highlighting how turf integrates into Japanese garden design. Participants observed turfcare practices that harmonize with bonsai collections and traditional aesthetics.

- Kawagoe City Museum & Kawagoe Castle (Saitama):

This heritage site illustrated turf use in preserving and enhancing urban green spaces around Edo-period landmarks, blending cultural tourism with environmental design.

- Zenko-ji Temple & Onioshidashi Park (Nagano):



Zenko-ji, one of Japan's oldest and most visited Buddhist temples, served as a backdrop to discussions on grounds maintenance in heritage sites. Onioshidashi Park, formed by volcanic activity from Mt. Asama, provided insights into turf and plant management in extreme rocky terrains and highlighted conservation strategies in fragile landscapes.

Despite light to moderate rainfall on some routes, all tours were completed without disruption. The day concluded with a BBQ party at Karuizawa Taliesin, located by a scenic lake, offering participants an informal setting for continued discussion, cross-cultural networking, and reflection. The field tours were a cornerstone of ITRC2025, bridging scientific knowledge with field-level application, and emphasizing sustainability, regional adaptation, and the intersection of turfgrass science with Japan's cultural and environmental diversity.

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## Social Events

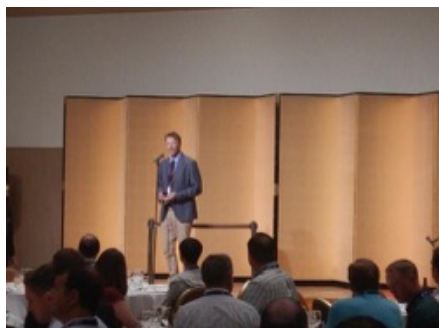
Social events at ITRC2025 played a vital role in fostering international exchange, cultural appreciation, and collegial networking among participants. The conference opened with a Welcome Reception on the evening of July 12 at the Karuizawa Prince Hotel, offering a relaxed and friendly atmosphere for delegates to reconnect and initiate conversations across borders. Attendees from more than 26 countries enjoyed regional cuisine and informal discussions, setting a warm and collaborative tone for the days ahead.



Midway through the conference, on July 15, participants joined a scenic BBQ Party at Karuizawa Taliesin following the day-long technical tours. Set in a tranquil lakeside park, the BBQ offered a relaxed atmosphere where attendees could unwind, share impressions from the tours, and enjoy local specialties. Although there was a slight rain, the event proceeded smoothly and comfortably under the shelter of the tent, further enhancing the sense of community and cross-cultural exchange that defines ITRC.

The conference concluded with a formal Banquet on July 16 at the Karuizawa Prince Hotel, blending ceremonial reflections with cultural performances. In his opening address, President of ITRC2025, Mr. Tonogi, reflected on the long journey since first proposing Japan's bid in 2013—overcoming initial opposition, hosting the 2015 Okinawa turf symposium, securing the successful 2017 bid, and navigating challenges such as COVID-19 and a venue change to Karuizawa.

He expressed deep gratitude to the International Turfgrass Society executives, the Japan Turfgrass Society, and



Editor-in-Chief Prof. Soldat, whose leadership ensured the success of the proceedings. Mr. Tonogi emphasized that the unity and solidarity symbolized in the conference logo were realized through this cooperation and encouraged participants to carry these connections forward to the next ITRC in Canada in 2029, formally entrusting leadership to incoming ITS President Dr. Katerina Jordan.

The evening continued with formal remarks, including a sponsor speech from Dr. Bert Wegenmans of Syngenta, the conference's Legacy Premier Sponsor, and a toast by Dr. John Cisar. The entertainment celebrated Japanese culture, beginning with a traditional dance and musical performance by geisha Seiko-san and musician Wakana-san from Asakusa in Tokyo, followed by a dynamic taiko performance by Daisama Kaendaiko. The final act featured Ms. Madoka Kusumoto, a renowned Electone performer, who captivated the audience with a fusion of traditional and modern music.



The banquet concluded with closing remarks from Dr. Jordan, warmly inviting participants to the next ITRC in Canada. Attendees were then welcomed to continue informal networking at the Kurumi cafeteria, where conversations extended late into the evening. Collectively, the banquet enriched the scientific program with cultural depth, gratitude, and personal connection, ensuring that ITRC2025 will be remembered as a truly significant and unifying international gathering.

## Special Program - Japanese Culture Introduction

Held on July 13 and 14 in the Shirakaba room at Karuizawa Prince Hotel, the Japanese Culture Introduction Program offered ITRC2025 participants a hands-on opportunity to experience traditional Japanese culture. Key activities included a flower arrangement (Ikebana) class by a Sogetsu school instructor, Yukata dressing, calligraphy with brush pens, origami, and trials of

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traditional toys like Kendama and Otedama. An etiquette corner introduced Japanese customs such as dining and bathing manners, and a tea and sweets tasting provided a sensory insight into local flavors. The program was well received and provided a relaxing cultural complement to the scientific sessions, enhancing international exchange and appreciation for Japanese traditions.



### Pre-Conference Tour

Ahead of ITRC2025, a six-day Pre-Conference Tour was held from July 6 to 11, 2025, with around 10 participants. The tour offered a unique opportunity to explore key turfgrass sites and cultural landmarks across Japan, concluding in Karuizawa, the conference venue. Participants visited Keya Golf Club in Fukuoka, the Peace Memorial Museum and Miyajima Shrine in Hiroshima, and some iconic sites in Kyoto including Kiyomizu-dera Temple and Fushimi-Inari Shrine. In Tokyo, the group toured Toyosu Fish Market, Hamarikyu Garden, Senso-ji Temple, Tokyo Skytree, and the Shibuya district. The tour successfully combined turfgrass learning with rich cultural experiences, setting the stage for the main conference.



### Sponsorship Overview

The success of ITRC2025 was made possible through the generous support of a wide range of sponsors, who contributed a total of ¥54.9 million—58 sponsors including 19 international

sponsors. This essential funding enabled the smooth delivery of the conference's technical sessions, practitioner seminar, graduate student competition, field tours, and social events.

A total of 58 sponsors were recognized across the following categories:

- Legacy Premier Sponsor (1): Syngenta
- Premier Sponsors (5): Husqvarna, TourTurf, Envu, The Toro Company, Kyoeisha
- Platinum Sponsors (3): Bichemic, Maruwa Biochemical, Rikengreen
- Gold Sponsors (13): STERF, BASF, SDS Biotech, The R&A, PBI Gordon, USGA, Nihon Nohyaku, Rainbow Chemical, Toyo Green, Ishihara Sangyo Kaisha, Ecorobotix, MC Ryoka, Turfgrass Research & Development Organization of Japan
- Silver Sponsors (6): CropLife Japan, Nissan Chemical, HYPONeX Japan, Agro-Kanesho, ICL, Higashinohon Hiryo
- Bronze Sponsors (20): Kaneko Seeds, Royal Green, Benidai, Nasu Nursery, JGIA, ZMCP, RhizoSolutions, Takii & Co., Ltd., Tomogreen, Nichino Ryoka, Kyushu Nozai, Harrell's, DLF, CSSA, Snow Brand Seed, Sakata Green Service, GCSAA, Corteva Agriscience, Semillas Fitó, SD by DALMAU
- Small Sponsors (10): Mr. Takeshi Onishi, Taishin Sangyo, KS, Royal Turf Company, JCAM Agri, TZ Turf, Spectrum, Morosada, Mr. Takao Yamada, Proactive (Includes both individuals and smaller entities supporting the event.)

The ITRC2025 Organizing Committee expresses its deepest gratitude to all sponsors. Their collective support exemplifies a shared global commitment to turfgrass science, sustainable turf management, and collaboration between academia and industry. Without their strong support, ITRC2025 would not have been possible.





## NIBIO International Turfgrass Field Day 2025

by Lars Sandved Dalen (NIBIO communicator), Trygve S. Aamlid, Tatsiana Espevig, Michael Bekken & Anne F. Borchert  
NIBIO Turfgrass Research Group

NIBIO's (The Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research) International Turfgrass Field Day was held at Landvik, Grimstad (280 km southwest of Oslo) on September 9th, 2025. Demonstrations of new technology and new variety trials gave participants valuable knowledge about sustainable management of turfgrasses, with a focus on golf courses. This year's Field Day gathered more than 100 people from 11 countries, a new record for the event, which has taken place every other year since 2013.



**Photo 1.** Participants were welcomed to NIBIO Landvik by this banner (photo by Lars Sandved Dalen, NIBIO).

The theme for this year's field day was sustainable water management - a very relevant topic following this year's early summer drought in southern Norway. At Landvik weather station the total precipitation deficit (evapotranspiration (ET) - rainfall) for April-July 2025 was 160 mm, and there were days with ET up to 5.8 mm, which is unusual in a coastal climate at 58°N. Thus, there is no doubt that global warming is having an impact on turfgrass water use in the Nordic countries.



**Photo 2.** With over 100 participants from 11 countries, this year's international turfgrass field day set a new record (photo by Lars Sandved Dalen, NIBIO).

### Precision Irrigation

In the morning session, three invited speakers addressed the enormous challenges facing turfgrass managers in warm and dry regions. Dr. Chase Straw, Associate Professor at Penn State University USA, focused on sustainable solutions for irrigation of golf courses and sports turf. Straw is an expert on precision irrigation and has extensively researched mapping soil moisture variation on golf courses. One of his conclusions was that superintendents' perceptions of wet and dry areas do not always coincide with the actual drought stress perceived by the grass, and that new technologies such as sensors and satellite data offer solutions to fill this gap. Straw mentioned courses where water consumption had been reduced by 25 percent by going from blanket irrigation to precision irrigation of fairways.

The second speaker, Dr. Trygve S. Aamlid, NIBIO, presented preliminary results from the STERF and R&A funded projects FAIR WATER and FAIR WATER II. These projects focus on the potential for soil surfactants and new turfgrass mixtures to improve not only drought tolerance, but also recovery ability after drought on fairways and in lawns. Trials are conducted under rain-shelters at NIBIO Landvik. Aamlid presented some examples of surfactants' ability to increase and level out variation in soil water content, and results showing superior drought tolerance of tall fescue, sheep fescue and certain cultivars of perennial ryegrass, but he also cautioned that many of the drought tolerant varieties need further testing for winter hardiness before they can be recommended for the Nordic countries.

The third speaker, Dr. Bernd Leinauer from the New Mexico State University, listed several strategies for saving water on golf courses:

- Reduce the area being irrigated (This is already practiced on many Nordic golf courses which do not have irrigation on fairways)
- Use recycled water, brackish water, or other water sources of low quality (The use brackish water for fairway irrigation on golf course along the Baltic Sea is currently being investigated in FAIR WATER II)
- Reduce evaporation by using drought-tolerant

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grass species and growth regulators

- Increase irrigation efficiency through optimized planning and more even watering

Leinauer also had a controversial suggestion to use artificial turf where appropriate, though not everyone agreed to that!



**Photo 3.** Drs. Chase Straw and Bernd Leinauer were invited speakers at NIBIO International Turfgrass Field Day (photo by Lars Sandved Dalen, NIBIO).

### Field Walk

After the morning lectures, participants were divided into groups and invited on a field walk at NIBIO Turfgrass Research Center. Twelve different field trials were visited, including:

- Variety testing: SCANTURF, SCANGREEN, and GEVES trials
- Testing of organic fertilizer for grow in of sand-based greens
- Different sowing times and use of covers for faster establishment of greens at low soil temperatures
- Robotic mowing
- Second Sun, testing the use of reflected light to improve turf growth on shaded greens
- Precision spraying of weeds on fairways by the Swiss company Ecorobotix
- FAIR WATER: Improving drought tolerance and recovery after drought on golf course fairways

### Research Programs & Funding Opportunities

At the end of the day, Maria Strandberg and Bruno Hedlund, director and chair of Scandinavian Turfgrass and Environment Research Foundation (STERF), presented the foundation's new research programs in four areas:

- **Sustainable use of natural resources in golf course management**

- **Winter stress and integrated pest management**

- **New technologies**

- **Multifunctional golf courses and ecosystem services – Landscape perspective**

Strandberg and Hedlund emphasized the need for large international research projects and mentioned the three projects recently funded collectively by USGA, R&A and STERF as good examples.

- **Alternative strategies for sustainable management of dollar spot (Project leader Paul Koch, University of Wisconsin)**

- **Pathways to a climate-positive future for golf (Project leader Michael Bekken, NIBIO)**

- **Leveraging satellite data for water conservation of golf course fairways (Project leader Qiyu Zhou, North Carolina State University)**

STERF is currently also having a new call for proposals with a deadline of 1 Oct. and Strandberg and Hedlund were hopeful for many new proposals.



**Photo 4.** NIBIO Turfgrass Researchers and staff at NIBIO Landvik in front of SCANGREEN variety testing (photo by Lars Sandved Dalen, NIBIO).



## ITS Website and Social Media

by John Kaminski  
International Turfgrass Society Website Editor

I am pleased to introduce myself as the new web editor for the International Turfgrass Society. In this role I oversee the website and I am also responsible for processing online memberships. If you have already renewed, thank you. If not, I am asking you to register or renew now (<https://turfsociety.com/join/>) so we can keep the work of the Society moving at full speed as we build toward our next congress in Guelph in 2029.

Membership is more than a line on a resume. Your dues keep the research engine running. The Society must commit funds well in advance of each congress cycle to support the International Turfgrass Research Journal and partnering journals. Editors, reviewers, publishers, and production teams begin their work years before you hold the printed proceedings or see final articles. Early and steady membership revenue allows us to schedule issues with confidence, maintain rigorous peer review, commission invited papers, and keep our publication timelines on track. When members renew early, we can plan responsibly, avoid rush fees, and direct more resources to science rather than to contingency costs.

Your membership also delivers direct benefits. You stay connected to the global community of turfgrass scientists, educators, students, practitioners, and industry partners. You receive Society updates and calls for papers, learn about student and early career opportunities, and gain access to announcements about grants and collaborative projects. Members receive news about the congress, symposia, and workshops, and they have a voice in Society governance. The network is real and active, and it pays dividends in shared data, field validation, method development, and job opportunities across continents. If you value consistent, credible science that solves practical problems, membership is the most efficient way to support it.

As web editor I want the website to be a useful hub between our quadrennial meetings. If you are organizing a field day, seminar, short course, or regional conference, send me the details and I will add the event to the calendar. Include the event title, dates, location, a brief description, and a registration

link if available. My contact information is posted on the Society website, and I will acknowledge your submission and publish it promptly. A current calendar helps members plan travel, coordinate collaborations, and avoid conflicts that dilute attendance.

Please also join the Society's page on LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/turfsociety/posts/?feedView=all>). We will use it to share updates between newsletters, highlight new publications, feature member achievements, and circulate opportunities. The page is a simple way to widen the conversation, connect students to mentors, and showcase work that deserves attention. If you post about turfgrass research or education, tag the page so we can amplify it.

Renewing is straightforward. If you prefer to pay online, I will process your membership through the website system as soon as it arrives. If you pay by check or by direct deposit, please direct those payments to our treasurer, Scott McElroy, at Auburn University. Listing Auburn and Scott clearly on your remittance ensures accurate and timely reconciliation. You can also download a receipt of your payment (<https://turfsociety.com/account/?action=payments>) directly from the website after you register.

The path to a successful Guelph 2029 begins now. The research that will fill the journal and the proceedings is already under way. Field trials are being planned, data are being collected, and manuscripts are being drafted. Your early renewal supplies the predictable funding that lets the Society support this work without pause. It is the simplest way to underwrite credible science, timely publications, and a strong program when we gather next.

Thank you for your membership and for the work you do to advance turfgrass science. Renew today, send us your events, and connect on LinkedIn. If you have ideas to improve the website or the member experience, I am listening. Together we can deliver the publications, meetings, and community that our field needs.



# INTERNATIONAL TURFGRASS SOCIETY

## Exchanging Turfgrass Knowledge Worldwide

The International Turfgrass Society (ITS) is a not-for-profit scientific organization that encourages research and education in turfgrass science.

ITS was established in 1969 and promotes communication among international turfgrass researchers by organizing international conferences on turfgrass research and all phases of turfgrass production and use.

International Turfgrass Research Conferences (ITRC) are held at 4-year intervals and the next ITRC will be held in Canada in 2029.

ITS membership is a 4-year subscription (2025-2029) and includes the following benefits:

- Copy of the ITS Research Journal from the next ITRC
- Discounts for ITRC registration
- Back issues of the ITRC Proceedings and Journal articles
- Access to the Members Only section of the ITS website
- Subscription to the ITS Newsletter

Join ITS and ensure your discount for ITRC2029 Canada

Standard subscription fee is 325 USD - Student discounts apply

Please download the membership application form from the ITS homepage [turfgrassociety.com](https://turfgrassociety.com)





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