Turf Students Place all Three Teams in the Top Ten

Three teams of Agronomy students traveled to Orlando, FL for the 11th annual collegiate turf bowl competition hosted during the 2005 Golf Course Superintendents Association of America International Golf Course Conference and Show. Purdue students placed fifth, eighth, and ninth out of 83 teams from across the world. Iowa State University captured the title this year. Agronomy students James Bergdoll, Chase Best, Nick Gressley, Jake Metz, Dan Mudd, Jim Newman, Brandon Rux, David Shell, Joey Stevenson and Cory St. Clair represented Purdue this year. Prior to the competition students set their goal on finishing first. Students made a commitment to improve their placement in this year’s contest after placing second in 2003 and 2004. Despite the weekly practice, with hour-long study sessions starting in September students fell shy of their goal of finishing first but met another goal by being the first University to place all three of their teams in the top ten. Students were proud to have represented their school well. Aaron Patton, who coaches the turf bowl squad commented that “This is the best group of students that I have worked with yet, and I am extremely proud of the hard work and dedication that students put forth during their preparation for this year’s competition.”

During their preparation, students were responsible for not only studying the material but also preparing and giving presentations. Students are responsible for information about turf science across the nation, not just issues pertaining to the Midwest. The three-hour turf bowl competition included the identification of soils, seed, grasses, disease, insects and weeds. The competition covers mathematics, plant physiology, and growth and development. Purdue’s performance in the competition over the last four years has helped to bring additional recognition to the university, college and department. Students are already looking forward to next year’s competition in New Orleans. Their goal is to once again have all teams place in the top ten and to also have one team finish first. The team would like to acknowledge the support they received this year from the Agronomy Department, the Midwest Regional Turf Foundation and their advisor Dr. Cale Bigelow. Please commend them on their performance and hard work the next time you see these students.