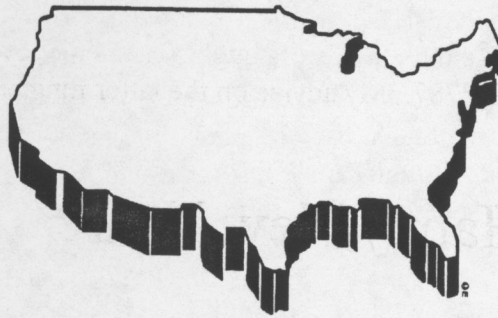


# TURFCOMMS



V. 8, I. 4

Dec. 19, '94

**PURPOSE:** To pass on what we learn willingly and happily to others in the profession so as to improve turf conditions around the country.

**TEAM [Trifluralin (Treflan) and Benefin (Balan)]:** To keep winter annual weeds out of my St. Augustine/bermudagrass lawn I used this preemerge in Sept. As I spread this granular formulation on my lawn dust from it drifted over to my fall planted tomato plants and clobbered the new growth and the new fruit. I knew it was a hot preemerge but I just had another learning experience.

**GCSAA Maximizing Turfgrass Disease Control Seminar:** Attended the one offered in Oklahoma City in late October and was very pleased. Felt I definitely got my \$100 worth out of it. All superintendents should attend, especially those in the humid East. In addition to presenting the fungicides in the property groups like Dr. Elliott and I gave you in an earlier newsletter they provided sheets on each of the fungicides which included helpful hints you won't find on the label and a similar sheet on each disease. They emphasized the importance of cultural practices in controlling the root diseases such as Spring dead spot, Summer patch, Bermudagrass decline, and Take-all-patch. Among cultural practices of importance after height of cut were the beneficial affects of acidifying fertilizers, and aerification. They also mentioned that composts are apparently providing no control of these type diseases although their use is providing some reduction in foliar diseases.

There was a lot of emphasis on correct spraying. Strongly suggested was the use of four to five gallons of water per thousand square feet for most fungicides and 10 to 21 gallons per thousand for Consan-20 (Algaen-X). That is correct, best control of algae with Algaen-X is obtained with the recommended rate in 21 gallons of water per thousand square feet. The product is good but the extra water is needed for best control.

Dr. Couch suggested you should be taking and recording the pH of each tank of spray solution. There are good pH meters out there for under \$100 he says. Don't let your legal case against the manufacturer go down the drain because you didn't take pH. Ideally pH should be 6.5.

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They noted that spraying of fungicides with fan or raindrop nozzles for contact fungicides was three to four times more effective than using granular contact fungicides. In other words it would take three to four times more active ingredient of a granular contact fungicide to get the same degree of control as obtained with a spray application. If you must use granulars they said O.M. Scotts formulations were the best. They suggested before using granular fungicides that you mow and irrigate the turf the day before and then apply the granular in the early morning of the next day and do not mow or water that day. If you haven't taking this seminar yet plan to do so soon.

**TEXAS TURF CONFERENCE 12/94: ZOYSIA:** Dr. Engelke started off with a review of zoysia varieties. He pointed out that billbugs and nematodes are serious problems in this genus. There are five species, three of which have some importance in turf. He said that the tropical sodweb worm loves Meyer. He noted that two varieties have excellent resistance, El Toro and the yet unreleased DALZ8502. El Toro came up again as one of two varieties with very low water requirements. Another yet to be released cultivar DALZ5812 was the other variety.

He then went into a discussion of his three top experimental varieties. DALZ 8502, 8507, and 8512. 8502 is a *Z. matrella* with good shade tolerance, fine textured and a possible six months sod harvest cycle. The latter because the rhizomes left after lifting the sod are so thick that recovery is very rapid.

DALZ8507 also is a fine textured *Z. matrella*. This one he notes as being cold hardy with a 12 month sod harvest cycle.

DALZ8512 is a coarse textured *Z. japonica* that is very drought tolerant, with rapid regrowth from rhizomes and a tolerance for 3/8 inch height of cut.

**TEXAS BLUEGRASS:** Dr. James Read also of A&M informed us about this native which shows the most promise as a parent for crosses with Kentucky bluegrass. However, such crosses so far have a slow rate of spread, poor salt tolerance, very fuzzy seed and slow germination. The very fuzzy seed common to TX bluegrass has kept this species off the seed market.

**BERMUDAGRASS:** Dr. Charles Taliaferro, the OK grass breeder, reviewed the previous work on this species with emphasis on the seeded cultivars. I enjoyed his discussion of how Arizona common seed came into being. It seems that back in the early part of the century bermudagrass became an increasing problem in the irrigated alfalfa fields in Southwestern AZ. When the industry found that there was a market for bermudagrass seed they switched crops. He pointed out that as you might expect this source of seed has poor winter hardiness and light to no leafspot resistance, neither trait being needed in sunny AZ. There is a good tendency for salt tolerance. He indicated that except for Guymon the new seeded cultivars do not have cold tolerance and quality wise all are inferior to Tifway. Two yet to be released cultivars, OKS 91-11 and J-27, should be improvements in that characteristic.

The next day on the program Dr. Taliaferro updated us on the vegetative bermudagrass selections. He told us that cultivars Midiron and Vamont did not do well in quality ratings. He noted Midiron is a poor sod former. He noted that the Kansas cultivars Midfield and Midlawn looked good in 1993 tests across the country. These are finer textured, interspecific hybrids between *C. dactylon* and *C.*



transvaalensis like Tifgreen and Tifway. He noted that Tifgreen and Tifway still get the best ratings of released cultivars but a yet released experimental, TDS-BM1 looked better. If you are looking for a low nitrogen requiring cultivar with excellent drought tolerance that has tolerance to mites, mole crickets and nematodes try FloraTex he suggested. It is however, susceptible to sting nematodes and has lots of seedheads in the spring.

Taliaferro said that the African bermudagrasses he is working on do better on heavy soils than on sandy soils.

**OVERSEEDING:** Mike Robinson of Seed Research in Oregon discussed this topic. Overseeding zoysia was mentioned, noting that perennial ryegrass tends to wipe out the zoysia but that tall fescue overseeding can be done successfully. Dr. Koski, Colorado turf extension specialist, wrote to tell me the same thing. Mr. Robinson also told us of new colonial bentgrass cultivars that looked promising for overseeding bermudagrass greens. They behave and look much like creeping bentgrass but are less persistent at spring transition time.

**AUGUSTA NATIONAL:** Want to lengthen your course for a major tournament. Dr. Coleman Ward pointed out that when Augusta mowed all its fairways from green to tee the players complained about the course playing longer. The grass laying down towards the tee lengthened the holes. Currently on courses allowing golf carts on fairways and with normal mowing the grass lays down pointing toward the green. To reverse it would mean removing cart traffic and circling the mowers for one direction mowing.

**BENTGRASS:** Dr. Engelke first told us of some Texas research that said the drying process not the cooling process brought on by stationing fans around bentgrass greens was their important function of the fans. Is he saying we over water our greens that have poor air circulation? I think so, and I think he is correct.

Engelke went on updating us on how the new bentgrasses are doing. He noted that his yet to be released Syn 1-88 is very salt tolerant. That Crenshaw has better shade tolerance than Cato. That Crenshaw, Lopez, Putter and Procup did the best in David Stone's "death trap". This is a boxed in test plot area that Stone has built on the course he manages in Tennessee. If you have a green with poor air movement his "death trap" has a reputation of being still worse. Engelke also mentioned that Providence and SR 1020 have looked good in the nation wide tests.

Adding to our information on creeping bentgrass was Dr. Leah Brilman of Seed Research, Oregon. She surprised me by saying that Penneagle was released by Duich for fairways. That certainly isn't what I remembered hearing. She pointed out that Dr. Skogley of the Univ. of R.I. spent 20 years developing Providence. This is a five clone synthetic variety that has fine texture, upright growth, improved dollar spot resistance, no grain and dark color. It also has good Fusarium, Brown patch and Take-all patch resistance. Providence blends well with SR 1020 to give you Dominant she pointed out.



SR 1020 was developed by Dr. Kneebone at Univ. of AZ and is also a five clone synthetic. It is noted as having good wear tolerance, high density, good to moderate resistance to Summer patch and Brown patch. It is susceptible to dollarspot and I've heard elsewhere - snowmold.

Tom Werner, superintendent at Colonial CC of Ft. Worth, discussed using turning boards to protect collars and the use of Cup Savers except during the PGA event. I'm surprised at the number and type of clubs I see these latter devices at, they have been well received.

**GOLF and the ENVIRONMENT** was the next session at the Conference. Gary Grigg, CGCS, Maples National Golf Club, FL, started this off with a nice introductory script on the typical superintendent and his feelings on the environment. Gary pointed out that golfers were more concerned about pesticide use on the golf course affecting the environment than either non-golfers or city planning directors.

Jim Moore, Director of the Mid-Continent Region of the USGA Green Section, gave "Ten Environmentally Safe Steps for Your Golf Course". These included wash racks or pads, proper pesticide storage, crew education, and the NY Auduborn Program. He also suggested we start calling pesticides **Plant Protectors** and low maintenance areas should be called **Wildlife Nesting Habitats**.

**HOW TO GET FIRED and REHIRED:** Jim Moore gave a good talk on why superintendents get fired and then gave some excellent ideas on improving your resumes. He felt that the increase in job loses within the profession was due to a number of factors. One, the large number of students graduating from turf programs around the country was creating more competition in the job market. That high salary levels made some superintendents a target. General managers hired to improve a club's overall situation may fire a superintendent to show that they are doing something. He also blamed the increase in management companies as being partially responsible. Also blamed was the lack of long term benefits. He also pointed to the fact that people feel sport professionals are out of control and as part of that arena you are an expendable manager.

Now to get rehired he used the portfolio concept as used by Tommy Witt. Tommy takes a lot of before and after pictures then apparently uses them along with his resume when he applies for a position. Sounds like a great idea and it appears to be working very well for Tommy. If you think I have any before slides in my file you could use give me a call. Jim also suggested follow up letters, and emphasis your knowledge of the game and your desire to provide a service. Good advise for any professional.

**ALGAE CONTROL:** Dr. Phil Colbaugh, TX A & M, noted that surfactants improve the ability of Fore to control algae **BUT, kills the grass** at the level where assistance in algae control occurs. He strongly recommended using Consan 20 (Algaen-X) only as a **drench**, the control is not good with low volumes of water (less than five gallons/M). He thought for the money you would be better off with repeated applications of Daconil 2787. My advice on the latter fungicide is don't use the flowable formulation.

Happy New Year