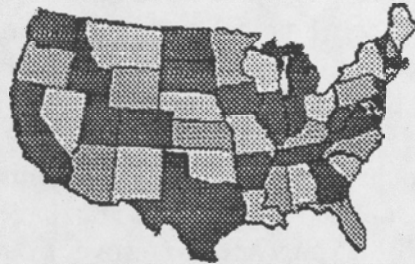


TurfComms

V. 13, I.9



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

OKLAHOMA TURF CONFERENCE: I agreed to give two talks at this conference in November. My talks were: **the top two inches** – in reference to putting greens; and a **slice of history** – here I used key dates in my own life as reference points to what was taking place in the turf industry. The first I have discussed enough here and the second needs work and perhaps slides/pictures to be effective. Giving talks at a conference is not conducive to taking good notes from the speakers, but here are a couple.

1) **JOHN SZKLINSKI, superintendent of Southern Hills, spoke on Hosting and Recovering from the 2001 US Open.** He first spoke of the need to have copies of MSDSs and equipment inventory off site in case your maintenance building burns down. He speaks from experience. He mentioned removal of 250 trees before the Open, not to make the course easier but, so they could grow better turf. Mr. Szklinski mentioned that the Open staff widened one fairway and narrowed a few others. They lost 4 acres of bermudagrass from the winter prior to the Open and another 4 to traffic in the roughs during the Open. He also talked of slowing the 9th and 18th greens down because of the slope in them. They used potassium nitrate for this purpose. John S. was a very good speaker.

2) **Grub Control:** Dr. Tom Royer, Ohio St. U. Ext. Entomologist spoke on insect control. Summarizing all test since 1976 in Ohio: Merit at 0.3 lb. ai/A gave the best average control at 94%, while Mach II at 1.5 lb. ai/A was second at 93% control. Two

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insecticides that gave good grub control even after waiting 7 days to water in were Meridan (25WG or 0.33G) and Merit 75WP.

COMPUTERS: Well it happened to me! the power supply over heated and I lost a fair amount of time, info., and \$. About the time it was repaired/rebuilt, it was time to leave for the 'Valley' where I am now (Jan. 22). I did, while this was being done, move over to the laptop with some degree of success but I was using the old AmiPro word processing software on the old computer and M.S. Word on this one. They don't blend well.

Cynthia(wife): December 5th she got badly needed **new knee joints** so I missed the Texas Conf. while helping her recover. She says if you need to have two done have them done at one time. The pain is such that if you waited to recover from the first to have the second done you might just decide to hobble along on one good knee rather than go through the experience a second time.

NEW MOTORHOME: Last year we spent two months down here(the Valley) in Cynthia's old 21 foot, class C Winnebago Warrior on a Toyota pickup chassis. Just before we left this year we traded it in on a 26 foot class C Four Winds Thor on a Chevy 3500 van chassis. In this one we can tow the Honda Civic we have. This was great because Cynthia could not yet drive when we left in January. On the way down I found that the great mileage we were getting was just that this vehicle had a great big gas tank. Finally, at about 400 miles and the gauge showing ¼ full I stopped and put in 41 gallons. That was a first for me, never had a vehicle with a gas tank that big.

THE PERFECT LIE: Go back and read or at least look at the article again. That is in the USGA Green Section Record, V.39, #6, Nov./Dec.2001. It shows quite convincingly why golfers want bentgrass fairways not Kentucky bluegrass. On bentgrass fairways you will have about 40 mm of the ball exposed to the clubhead while on bluegrass fairways it will be about 25 to 28 mm. There are cultivars of Kentucky bluegrass that are significantly better (by a mm or two) than others but who is going to put up with a two mm improvement when a 15 mm improvement is possible.

GOLFDOM: Pat Jones has done a great job with this magazine and it took another step forward with the Jan. 2002 issue. They have always been a superintendent friendly magazine and Jones continued the tradition of the Graffis Brothers. He has now included TurfGrass Trends within it. The latter is an excellent publication that has attempted to publish scientific data in a form the average superintendent could make use of. Also, with the next issue, Dr. Karl Danneberger becomes the chief science editor. I suggest the Golfdom magazine should be on your reading list right after you read the USGA Green Section RECORD, and GCSAA's magazine each month. In fact, once you have read these three, you are probably wasting your time reading any other turf magazine except TurfComms and your local GCSAA chapter newsletter.

TURF MANAGEMENT FOR GOLF COURSES by James B. Beard, 2nd Edition:

This book “emphasizes the application of basic turfgrass principles to golf course turfgrass culture.” But, “these principles are not covered here in detail...” For example if you wish to review the principles behind topdressing of greens this is not the place to find such a discussion. However, you will find mention of it under alternate or temporary putting green preparation, under preplant soil preparation, broadcast sprigging, sodding, postplant turf care, a good page of material under maintenance practices, under cultivation, and under fine-leaf fescue greens.

My next approach to evaluating this text was to look at the chapter on putting greens with emphasis on construction. The USGA has spent much time, and money researching and promoting their proposed method of putting green construction and I wanted to see if they gave any coverage to other methods in this “Publication of the USGA”. Well can’t say they didn’t give any coverage to other methods; but, essentially, they did not. Two paragraphs which included a referral to Dr. Beard’s 1973 Turfgrass: Science and Culture text isn’t sufficient in my estimation but this 2nd edition is already a large text so something had to go.

I also did some private consulting for a rice compost firm and thus was interested in whether this product was mentioned under organic amendments. No mention!

I am sure you will find it an excellent text despite my above picky criticism. Just realize it is the first word on turf management for golf courses but, not the last.

COMPOST: Calif. Turfgrass Culture has in Vol. 51, an article on the use of topdressing with compost on bermudagrass. One quarter inch, four times per year looked very promising if you have lots of compost to get rid of as it improved quality over most other treatments and reduced crabgrass. Crabgrass and Poa annua were the two problem weeds in the turf prior to treatments. Poa annua population was not reduced by the compost applications over three years.

This compost when applied as four one quarter inch applications applied 8 lb.N/M. Thus nitrogen effect might well have been a factor. The compost did not result in a thatch buildup.

MONSANTO: This company has really gotten my attention over the last few years. It sues farmers growing crops containing Roundup ready genes even if they appear to have gotten there by wind blown pollen or seed. Now it has asked Congress to protect it (“in the name of national security,”) “by limiting its liability for any adverse effects of the bioengineered products they make...” reports the Hightower Lowdown, V.4, No. 2, Feb, 2002. Sounds to me they want it all.

The Avant Gardener, pg. 39 reports that Monsanto is being sued by farmers for genetic contamination of their crops. Some countries are not accepting crop products into their country if they contain genes not normally found in that crop. Thus a case could be made that Monsanto is destroying the world wide market for some crops in the U.S. of A. and Canada.

SEEDING BERMUDAGRASS: A good little piece of research into connecting winter hardiness, or survival, or great spring greenup, with nitrogen rate and seeding rate combinations reported in the Golf Course Management Feb. 2002 issue, pg. 53. Those that have seeded or established bermudagrass near or in the transition zone probably know or feel they have the correct answer. "Don't seed too heavy or fertilize too heavy if you want the best possible winter survival." And what is too heavy? Well, take a look at the article.

Now you have decided you want quick coverage from that seeding; or your boss does! How do you get both winter survival and quick coverage? Well you may find a satisfactory answer for the question in paragraph one above but, finding one for this second question will be difficult, at least when considering only seeding rate and nitrogen rate.

A second article on the subject is in the January 2002 issue(pg. 49) on herbicide use in new seedings of bermudagrass. Apparently, you have quite a few choices if you're careful and can tolerate a small amount of injury at the beginning so as to have less weeds in the final stand 30 days down the road.

MEXICO: Until mid-March of this year I had never been south of the border. So for a delayed honeymoon we went on a bus tour to Tampico, Mexico. There we stayed at the Club Maeva. Among other things the price of the tour covered a round of golf at nearby Lagunas De Miralta Golf Club. I hadn't played golf since last April so was very rusty. I shot a 59 on the front nine and 48 on the back nine from the gold tees (seniors). In spite of a poor round of golf and the fact that it was a development type layout with houses and house lots on both sides of many holes I thought it was an excellently designed golf course. I personally do not like development type designs with all the in course out-of-bounds, although in my old age I'm not as bothered by them as I used to be.

The course maintenance was good. Greens appeared to be 328 bermudagrass in need of a light topdressing. They had lost turf in fairways for some reason and repair work was in progress. Tees did not appear always to be level and tee markers were off the tees in two locations and too far to the back on another. But, if you get down there with a chance to play the course by all means take advantage of it.

END