

## March. 1985

# DATES TO REMEMBER

March 5-7 Massachusetts Turfgrass Conference and Show Springfield Civic Center, Springfield, Mass.

> March 15 News deadline for April Newsletter

March 20-21 Maine Turf Conference, South Portland, Maine No regular meeting of GCSANE in March

> April 1 & 2 GCSAA Computer Seminar Bluewater Resort, Bass River, Mass.

April 17 (Note Change) Qualification Round Guy Tedesco Scholarship Tournament Oyster Harbor Club, Osterville, Mass.

April 12 News Deadline for May Newsletter

May 6 GCSANE Regular Meeting - Wollaston G.C.

June 14 Guy Tedesco Scholarship Tournament Country Club of New Seabury

## **The Education Explosion**

This is that time of the "off-season" when the golf course superintendent marches to the sounds of a different beat. And, would you believe, he even gets to like it?

"I think everybody connected with golf sort of feels the itch coming on at Spring Conference time," says Dick Crosby who fills in all the blank spaces for inquiries concerning that annual endeavor of the Massachusetts Golf Association. "It's not exactly the kickoff to the golf season but it's close to it - more like warm-ups".

Dr. Joseph Troll concurs with Crosby whose official title is MGA Tournament Director. However, Joe also likens the UMass Turf Conference to the first signs of clubs, balls, greens and three-putt curses.

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P.G.R.'s; Are They For You? by Michael F. Nagle

At some point in every superintendent's career, the question of how to take control of the annual bluegrass problem on his golf course has crossed his mind. Until recently, a common answer to that question was a program involving an application of a rootinhibiting pre-emmergent herbicide in the spring, stingy watering and fertilization during the season and an aggressive overseeding program in late summer or early fall. This type of program had to be ongoing because the number of Poa annua seedheads would be reduced annually only by the newly overseeded grass that displaced Annual bluegrass plants.

Now, the development of Plant Growth Regulators (PGR's) such as Embark 2-S from 3-M Corporation give the superintendent the tool he has been lacking to substantially reduce Annual bluegrass competition. For a relatively low cost Poa annua seedheads can be nearly eliminated with one properly timed spray application of a PGR in the early spring of each year. Turf managers have known about Embark for several years, using it to control plant growth in difficult to mow areas. However, in March of 1983, 3-M received an E.P.A. label for the use of Embark 2-S for Poa annua seedhead suppression on fairways.

Prior to being labeled for seedhead suppression, Embark was used experimentally by Bill Gaydosh, at the Edgewood Country Club, Rivervale, New Jersey as early as 1978. The superintendent of this 27 hole private club first used rates of 16 and 8 oz. acre of Embark in the autumn when spraying test strips on fairways. Gaydosh remembers the results as drastic at the 16 oz. rate with the Poa annua either dead or discolored (yellow) in the spring. The bentgrasses though, weren't affected.

The following spring, Gaydosh treated various fairway areas with rates of 12, 8 and 6 oz. acre and found the best results with the 8 oz. rate. The 12 oz./acre areas were yellow and the 6 oz. areas weren't affected colorwise, but there were more seedheads. Bill even went so far the next year to spray 8

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Mal Wendell (Left) Superintendent, Highland G.C., receives congratulations from President Don Hearn upon receiving his GCSANE 25 year pin.

# Golf Course Superintendents Association -



Sponsors and administrators of the Troll-Dickinson Scholarship Fund - Awarded yearly to deserving Turf Management Students.

President's Message

Donald Hearn



The Annual Meeting was a good onewell attended with a fine educational presentation by John LaPoint of Golf Services Unlimited. John gave us his outlook on the future of the game, the golf course superintendent, speed of play, and the increase in management takeovers.

The GCSAA will grant one CEU toward recertification for members attending the Massachusetts Turfgrass Conference on March 5-7. In order to receive the credit you must attend the General Session on Tuesday, the Golf Course Session on Wednesday, and the Golf Course Session on Thursday.

Credit will not be given unless you attend all three sessions. A sign-up sheet will be available and your signature and membership number must appear on it to receive credit. If you have any questions on this please give me a call.

Those of you interested in the history of the game should visit Golf House in Weston where the offices of the Francis Ouimet Caddie Scholarship Fund, Massachusetts Golf Association, and the Womens Golf Association of Massachusetts are located. The Ouimet Fund has graphically displayed a History of Massachusetts Golf, along with plaques, trophies and memorabilia

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- Chip Shots -

Ron Hansen CGCS, Spring Valley C.C. was voted into our fold at the January meeting, welcome aboard! .... Jack Pluta is moving to Pittsfield C.C. as the new super...Dick Duggan (Concord C.C.) has asked us all over to watch the new television he won in Washington (I wonder if we get to choose the channel?) . . . Bernie Golonka, Supt. Pine Meadows G.C. has been voted into our organization as a regular member; Congratulations!!! ... . Did everyone read W, T, & T in January? Tony Caranci's brother and nephew were featured in the article "Pressure in Paradise" . . . Congratulatios are in order for our own Dictator Don Hearn for being elected Secretary-Treasurer of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. . .

of the Massachusetts Golf Association and golfing great Francis Ouimet.

The Ouimet Fund awarded over \$320,000.00 in scholarships to deserving students last year. These scholarships wee awarded to not only those who have served the game as caddies, but also to those who have worked on the golf course maintenance staffs of Massachusetts clubs. You can lend your support by contributing to this worthy scholarship program. Their address is: 190 Park Road, Weston, Mass. 02193.

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## - January Meeting -

Annual election of officers; 1984 Golf Awards; a very interesting presentation by John LaPointe of Golf Services Unlimited, Inc. on his views of the golf industry as it is and predictions for the future of our business, and as usual; excellent accommodations and eats provided by host Gary Lucini and Franklin C.C. . . . Thanks Gary!

## SMILE

It's good for grass, golf, and gripers.

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## Golf Course Superintendents Association OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.

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oz./acre of Embark on the back of one green. Except for discoloration, there were no adverse effects to be seen. He has since treated several other greens with about the same effect and their collars (aprons) as well. He also plans to use Embark at the 8 oz./ acre rate on his tees this year.

Because of advertising and word of mouth about Gaydosh's experiments, a number of superintendents in the New England area decided to put the newly approved chemical to the test. Among them were Mel O'Kelly at Marshfield C.C., Dick Zepp at Whitinsville Golf Club, Doug Johnson at Pine Brook C.C., Weston, Mass., Dean Robertson at Kernwood C.C. Mass., Orrin Ellis at Lexington C.C. Scott Niven at the The Stanwich Club, Greenwich, Conn. and myself at Worcester, C.C.

One of the first considerations in treating any area(s) with a PGR is the date of application. Most of the superintendents used indicator areas, such as south facing fairways, to determine when to spray. After seeing a few of the first seedheads emerge in these areas, the majority of superintendents felt this was the time to treat. Generally, this was the latter part of April. Doug Johnson used a different method, however. He felt the duration of the effect of the PGR would be about 8 weeks. He then picked a date on the calendar (approximately the 2nd week in June) when he wanted the grass to be growing on its own, and then counted back 8 weeks. Doug recalled the grass never greened up before he sprayed and the discoloration period was longer because of that. After the effect wore off, though, he didn't notice many late seedheads emerging. Orrin Ellis treats as soon as he can get out onto the course safely and feels he can't apply the Embark soon enough due to excessively wet early spring conditions at his layout.

Other considerations in using a PGR are factors of the application itself; the type of spray equipment, pressure, volume output, nozzle apparatus and rate(s) of the product.

There were various combinations of equipment, pressures, etc. used with the majority of the superintendents opting for the 100 or 110 gal. Cushman mounted sprayer with a boom. Pressure varied between 60 and 75 psi and the volume of water was between 30 and 50 gal./acre for this type of spray rig. The Tee Jet #6502 was the most popular nozzle for the boom and the Cushman was used in 2nd gear in low range at 2000 to 2300 RPM.

Dean Robertson and Scott Niven both used 300 gal. sprayers and got about 38 gal./acre. However, Dean used a Boom Jet spray head at about 120 psi and Scott employed a 27 ft. boom with the 6502 nozzles at 75 psi. Mel O'Kelly and Dick Zepp differed from everyone in their application equipment. Mel used a 150 gal. Cushman mounted sprayer with a Field Jet nozzle-using about 75 gal./acre. Dick used the most water, by far, of the group with 200 gal./acre through a 15' boom.

The spray pattern indicator Blazon seemed to be very popular when spraying Embark. Only Gaydosh and Robertson did not use it, relying instead on early morning dew patterns to help them see where they were spraying. Personally, I think that a spray pattern indicator (chains on the end of the boom or a colorant) is almost essential for accurate application of a PGR. My first year using Embark (1983), I did the spraving and used no pattern indicator. The results were consistant: I missed on every pass! The misses varied in width from a few inches to over 3 feet and some were the length of the fairway. This prompted two of my esteemed colleagues, who shall remain nameless, to dub me "Stripes". Needless to say, a copious supply of Blazon accompanied the PGR mix in 1984.

Most of the superintendents contacted agreed there was an increase in leaf spot during the seedhead suppression period. Although none of them mixed anything else with the PGR besides Blazon, some were planning to use a fungicide this year with the Embark solution to combat Helminthosporium.

By and large, most superintendents followed the recommended label rate and used Embark 2-S at 8 oz./acre. However, a few experimented with lower rates. Mel O'Kelly, admittedly a little skeptical, treated fairways with a 4 oz./acre rate first, to see if there would be any adverse effects. He then treated the same areas again with another 4 oz. dose about two weeks later. Dick Zepp and Scott Niven both agree that one 4-5 oz./acre at ation is sufficient to

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control seedheads satisfactorily, and at the same time, minimizing the discoloration of the Poa annua. Both superintendents experimented with 6 oz./acre applications before settling on the 4-5 oz./acre rate.

Regardless of the equipment, spray apparatus, rates etc., the calibration of the sprayer is of paramount importance. According to Bill Gaydosh, you have to know exactly how much material your sprayer is putting down. If your equipment isn't accurate, you won't be able to get the desired effect from the Embark.

After deciding when to apply the PGR, selecting the proper equipment and choosing a rate, the next step would be deciding which areas you will treat. All of the superintendents surveyed treated fairways, but Dick Zepp and Orrin Ellis also tested Embark on tees. Both noticed good seedhead suppression but Dick noticed that the grass was slow to recover and fill in because of golfing pressure.

Fairway heights were either 5/8" or 3/4'' and the grass species in them were Annual bluegrass, Kentucky bluegreas, Perennial ryegrass and various bentgrasses. Cutting frequency of fairways during the season was 3-4 times per week. However, after treating these areas with Embark, about half of the superintendents cut once per week because of turf growth retardation while the others maintained their normal cutting schedule. One of those who reduced cutting frequency, Mel O'Kelly, feels the PGR is a labor saving tool when he is short of help. He also says a rigid mowing schedule does not have to be adhered to when wet conditions prevail. Gaydosh, although still cutting fairways 3 times per week, agrees with O'Kelly. Wet areas, he remarked, can be left uncut up to two weeks without harmful effects on the grass.

The vast majority of superintendents were on a fairway overseeding program, most opting for creeping bentgrass. None of those who were overseeding fairways thought Embark had any effect on the growth of newly seeded bentgrass. Of the New England group, only Dick Zepp used strips on fairways (landing areas) to test the effect of the PGR in 1983. The contrast between treated and untreated areas, he said, as

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favorably noticed by Whitinsville's members. Dick went on to say that in 1984, he could see where he had treated the prior year, the growth in those areas being slightly stunted, especially the Kentucky bluegrass.

When asked if they were planning to treat areas other than fairways with Embark this spring, all but two superintendents responded affirmatively. Those areas ranged from several tees, to a grass nursery, to all tees, collars and greens. Most agreed that a reduced rate (2-6 oz./acre) would be used to treat those areas.

Although every superintendent had differing specific results, all concluded they would continue using this program to fight their Annual bluegrass problem. Discoloration was experienced by all who used Embark, but the duration varied from 2 weeks at the 4 oz./acre rate to 6-8 weeks at 8 oz./acre, with very little thinning of turf noted. Membership comments about discoloration ranged from compliments to no comments to strong complaints. Mel O'Kelly's conversation with one member about the color change was not a congenial one. The two haven't spoken since. However, Mel is sold on the program as is Doug Johnson, who noted that the discoloration is a small price to pay for such favorable results.

More survivability during stress periods is still a question without a conclusive answer. Although a few superintendents thought the Annual bluegrass on their courses was stronger than in years past, the majority noted there was no difference. Interestingly, Scott Niven noticed Antracnose in one fairway area that was missed by the sprayer, while the Embark treated remainder was disease free.

The general feeling of the superintendents is that timing, proper equipment and membership awareness are the three most important ingredients of this program. If one is lacking, the others cannot compensate to make the endeavor truly successful. However, this is not an end-all for the Annual bluegrass problem on our golf courses. It is only one tool we can use and must be employed with other intelligent, updated management practices. Perhaps the day will arrive when turf managers no longer have to wage war on Poa annua. Until then,



John LaPoint of Golf Services Unlimited adresses membership at January GCSANE meeting held at Franklin C.C.



I'll lay odds his baby picture is cuter . . . any guesses?

however, a battle or two can still be won by using our best resource yet - and it's sitting right there on our shoulders.

\*The author wishes to state that no endorsement of name products is intended, nor criticism implied of similar products which are not mentioned in this article, and wishes to thank all who took the time to offer their views and experiences with him on th<sup>2</sup>

#### **Double Processing**

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A nurse at the hospital asked a male patient for a urine specimen. Breakfast was served while she was out of the room, and the patient poured his apple juice into the urine bottle. When the nurse returned, he held up the "specimen" and said, "Don't you think this looks rather strange?"

"Yes," she replied. "We'll run a test on it right away and see what's wrong."

Suddenly brightening, the patient exclaimed, "Maybe if I run it through again it'll come out better the next time." So saying, he poured the apple juice back into his glass and drank it.

The nurse fainted.



A golf pro was trying to teach this obese woman a swing. He had her around the waist, his arms in hers and they were swinging back and forth. He tried to step away from her and found that her dress was caught in his zipper. For fifteen minutes he juggled back and forth but he couldn't get the dress out of his zipper. So they walked towards the clubhouse, looking for assistance. As they were walking, a big black dog rushed out of the underbrush and threw a pail of hot water on them.



#### **1985 GCSANE Board of Directors**

(Left to right) Mike Nagle, Worcester C.C., Newsletter Chairman; Dave Barber CGCS, Blue Hill C.C., 1st Vice President; Dick Zepp CGCS, Whitinsville G.C., Secretary; John Streeter CGCS, Alpine C.C., Finance Chairman; Steve Chiavaroli, CGCS, Tatnuck C.C., Trustee; Don Hearn CGCS, Weston G.C., President; Steve Murphy, Larry Gannon, Municipal G.C., Golf Chairman; Pierre "Pete" Coste, CGCS, 2nd Vice President, Paul Miller, Tedesco C.C., Trustee; Ed Brearley, Brockton C.C., Educational Chairman. Missing from Picture; Tom Schofield, CGCS, Wellesley C.C., Treasurer; Mark Klimm, C.C. of New Seabury, Trustee.

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Regardless, the MGA Spring Conference (now in its 23rd edition) and the UMass Turf Conference, which turns into its 54th presentation, are prime examples of educational experiences available to the superintendent. They are part of golf's education explosion and their input in the greening and "meaning" of the golf course are immeasurable.

MGA has first crack this year with a well-rounded program scheduled Mar. 2 at the Marriott Motel in Newton.

As usual, the conference hits to all fields with sessions touching on the greens section, handicapping, rules of golf, golf instruction and summary of the Ouimet Scholarship Fund program.

"We're really enthused about our association with the golf course superintendent," Crosby explained. "The relationship between the MGA and the New England supers has been on the upswing over the past 10 years or so. Certainly, it's been a plus for both parties."

The current president of the

NEGCSA has an on-going place on the MGA Executive Committee with Don Hearn presently filling that more recent responsibility of the profession.

"It's only natural that we tap the expertise of the golf course superintendent in pursuing our goals," Crosby added. "The superintendent adds another dimension to the executive committee. Obviously, golf course maintenance is an integral part of the whole golf picture. And I might say the superintendent has painted himself into an impressive position."

Of course, the long-standing relationship between the golf course superintendent and Joe Troll is a constant. Therefore, participation in the UMass Turf Conference is almost automatic where NEGCSA members are concerned.

Although he claims his years as director of the UMass show are piling up more than he cares to note, Dr. Troll continues to be just as wrapped up in the project as the day he took over the monumental task in 1958.

This year the main dates are Mar 5-6-

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## NEW ENGLAND, INC.-

7 and the place remains the Springfield Civic Center.

However, Joe's throwing in a bonus the day before or Mar. 4 when Pat Vittum of the Waltham Field Station presents an interesting and compelling session on the biology of insects and their control.

"We're doing this just for the super," Joe explained. "Hopefully, the national (GCSAA) will respond and approve the seminar for points toward its re-certification program. If this goes through this year, it may open up other avenues for future conferences."

This time, though, Dr. Troll and his staff have outdone themselves with a lineup of experts sure to cover any and all of the subject material conducive to good golf course grooming.

Some of them include John Jagschitz of Rhode Island U, Penn State's Paul Heller, Henry Wilkinson of University of Illinois, Paul Rieke of Michigan State, Nebraska U's Robert Schearman, outstanding golf course architects Geoff Cornish - Robert Muir - Michael Hurdzan and Alex Schigo of the Northeastern Forest Experimental Station.

"We've done just about everything humanly possible to make our program attractive to the golf course superintendent," Joe remarked. "Certainly, as the saying goes, there's something here for everyone. And, if we've missed anything, I'd like to know so we can put it on hold until next year."

Subjects at the UMass show range from tree care and top dressing methods to the nitrogen-turf connection and relationship between golf course design and maintenance.

So, the golf course superintendent has it all waiting for him - all packaged into two "local" educational offerings intended to set the table before he wheels out the main course, himself, in the start of his 1985 maintenance schedule.

He's marching to the educational beat, all right, and everything's right as the "off-season" begins to shed its skin. —GERRY FINN

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