Northwest TURFGRASS TOPICS

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From the President's Corner

By John Zoller

An article in the January, 1973, issue of Golfdom caught my eye and I invite you all to read it if you have not already done so. I refer to Herb Graffis' column 'Swinging Around Golf'.

In part, he says, "If there were any way of keeping comparative scores, the superintendent might have a lot of reasons for claiming they have made more progress for golf than the professionals have in improving playing or the managers in the economic and social position of the clubs. But the hell of the superintendent's job is that the better his results the more is expected of him. Of all the remarks made about the superintendent's importance, the one I remember the clearest was made by Tommy Armour when he was a member of Winged Foot and Sherwood Moore was superintendent. Tommy told some officials and members comfortably drinking in the grill: 'You're going to lose the man who grew grass on this rock pile and let me tell you that if our members were as good at their business as Moore is, the club would be overrun with millionaires'."

This is just another example of the support and boost that Herb Graffis has given our profession over the years. Also, in this article he salutes the USGA Green Section. In my opinion, this is well deserved and I want to go on record as wholeheartedly supporting their program and service. As our Research Assistant Program at Puyallup is about to be realized, I have been asked a number of times if this is not in conflict with the Green Section visiting service. I see no reason at all why it should be. To borrow again from Graffis' article, "The Green Section no longer has to be a fire department emergency service to locate and correct trouble on a course, but functions as a valuable consultant and coordinator of turfgrass research and its application nationwide." I, for one, am not going to be trapped into blindly evaluating a service on only the direct benefits I see today and forget about the things that helped me yesterday or may help me tomorrow.

Elsewhere in this paper is a report by Al Blair on his fund raising project for the Research Assistant Program. As one major source of revenue the Northwest Section of the PGA has proposed a one-day golf sweepstakes at all clubs. Their president has appointed a committee to work out the details of staging this tourney and the format will be announced as soon as it is finalized.

Joint NTA — WCTA Conference Progressing Well

The joint turfgrass conference between the Northwest Turfgrass Association and Western Canada Turfgrass Association, to be held at Harrison Hot Springs, British Columbia, on October 3-5, 1973, is nearing its final completion. The program committee of both associations met at the Northwest Washington Research and Extension Unit at Mount Vernon, Washington, on Saturday, March 10 to bring together all pertinent program topics and to begin the count down for the conference. Previous to this, directors from the Northwest Turfgrass Association met with representatives from Western Canada Turfgrass Association in February in Richmond, B.C., at the Greenacres Golf course to start the ball rolling. At the present time, a very good and interesting slate of speakers have accepted invitations to present papers at this conference and final programs will be mailed out in late summer.

Reserve the dates of October 3-5, 1973, at the present time. This is a conference you cannot afford to miss. This is a first!! The two associations have thrown together to make this the best ever. Those of you who wish to play golf in the Conference Tournament will need to show up on Tuesday morning in order to play at the Harrison Golf Club on Tuesday afternoon. More details regarding the tournament and the entire conference will be printed in the September issue of *Turfgrass Topics* to give you more exact details.

A large, well coordinated equipment show is being headed up by Bob Bailey and some very good assistants from the Vancouver, B.C., area.

The Western Canada Turfgrass Association committees are taking care of all local arrangements including conference site, golf tournament, hospitality rooms, and a few other local arrangements. Ron Proctor, who served as chairman of the equipment displays for the Northwest Turfgrass Association for the past two years will coordinate efforts with Bob Bailey and his group. The program development is equally shared by Western Canada Turfgrass Association and the Northwest Turfgrass Association. Dr. Doug Taylor, and Dr. Roy Goss will carry out the final development of the conference program, obtain the speakers, and develop the proceedings.

It is most important for all members of the Northwest Turfgrass Association to register at the proper desk at the conference. All members of the NTA who are currently paid up as of the spring of 1973 will pay no conference registration fee — only your banquet ticket and per diem. The registration for all Western Canada Turfgrass Association members will register at the WCTA registration desk.

It takes a little more effort to stage a conference such as

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Thatch Patch

By Jim Chapman

We can look back on an unusual winter, and try to analyze some of the effects of cold, dry weather. Many high sand areas suffered severe winter kill from the desiccation caused by freeze and frost. John Monson, at Broadmoor Golf and Country Club, observed interesting die-back along the edges of his traps, toward the greens, where sand has built up over the years.

There was quite a bit of foot and sled damage too, but Bruce Jackman has some of the most unusual at Clarkston Country Club — right in the banana belt. The Inland Empire Association of Golf Superintendents opened their 1973 program there in March. At this meeting, Wayne Dean, Yakima City Parks, was elected President; Vernon Harvey, Hayden Lake Golf & Country Club, Vice President; and Bud Ashworth, Hangman Valley Golf Course, steps into the Secretary-Treasurer slot, vacated by John Harrison's retirement.

Stan Bailey, Hi-Cedars Golf Course in Orting, Washington, can tell you all about how important iron and trace minerals are to good winter color and spring recovery. New research points more and more to the regular use of organic forms of trace elements — particularly on high sand and sand/sawdust greens.

Research on phosphorus also indicates that high levels of available phosphorus or that recently applied, may result in tie-up of iron and other trace elements availability. Perhaps this could help explain some of the winter chlorosis on high P areas. Have you had your turfgrass soils tested yet?

Port Ludlow, a new golf course in the making, has hired Dick Schmidt as their new superintendent. Dick was the former superintendent at Fairwood Golf and Country Club at Renton before accepting this new position. Fairwood is in the process of selecting a new superintendent for that position.

Other new construction plans started include Lewiston, Idaho; Spokane, Auburn, and Enumclaw. Hopefully, to be opened this spring also, is the second nine holes at Meadowsprings golf course in Richland.

It is definitely good to see the increase in interest among parks people for better turf. Upgrading programs in Everett, Redmond, and Spokane County are under way. Hopefully, there are many others that I don't know about yet.

So, we can review the winter and get our spring watering plans ready. Many areas already are irrigating in spite of night frosts. I noted a lot of water on the Yakima area Golf courses as they try to replace the moisture sucked from the ground by cold winter winds. (Editor's note: This was written in early April, so due to the lateness of the paper, some of these comments are a little old at this time.)

On top of the existing turf conditions, we might as well plan for a water shortage this summer. There is not much of a snow pack on these mountains to feed our irrigation needs during the dry spells.

What will you do if you can't water with every second or third night this summer? It might be a good idea to start talking to your people — greens committee, board members, park supervisors about that possibility.

Norv Gomness is back in Seattle. He was in Spokane for awhile but he is now with Nathan Hale High School. Of course, he is teaching turf. So, along with Steve Nord's class work at South Seattle Community College, we may have some more help coming.

Many of you know Norv but those of you who don't know him certainly know some of his earlier turf school graduates from Bellevue Community College: Mike Barnes, Bob Schoessler, Lloyd Brown, Bob Bowers, and Ben Malikowski. Welcome back, Professor. Time to go. Calls to make, you know. See you next trip.

From the Oregon Compost Heap

By Byron Reed

The February meeting of the OGCSA was a resounding success. There were 100 plus people in attendance for the lecture and at least 70 took the exam for the Chemical Applicators License. We owe a great deal of thanks to our host, Linn Benton Community College via Hal Johnson and our speakers, Tom Harrison, Bill Capizzi, Hal Johnson, Dr. Peter Scott, Tom Kreager, Jerry Mills, Vern Nielsen, Willard Lighty, and Dave Humphrey (who not only spoke but made the exam). We also thank those people behind the scenes for their fine effort.

Dick Fluter, Oregon Golf Course Superintendent's Association Education chairman, and other superintendents from that association, are working closely with Linn Benton Community College to help place students who are taking the turf management course there to find summer employment on golf courses in Oregon. Last year, Dick reports, that all students from the college were placed in summer employment. This really speaks well for the cooperation between the college and the golf superintendents. This year, 10 of the fellows taking the turf management course are also seeking summer employment as golf course trainees.

The April meeting of the OGCSA was held at the Longview Golf and Country Club at Longview, Washington and the educational topic was "Let's define irrigation" and was presented by Carl Kuhn, Consulting Civil Engineer from Mercer Island. (Editor's note: Byron reports that they have expanded their line of products and equipment which does not put him in as close contact with golf course people as he was before).

Green Grass Is Happiness

Green grass is happiness according to a recent poll conducted by the Agricultural Service. Among 26 things people were asked to consider important to their happiness, 95% chose green grass and trees. Next were good neighbors, modern kitchens, nearby shopping areas, or good schools. (Editor's note: This speaks well for the "real thing".)

NTA—WCTA Conference

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this one coming up, but it has all of the possibilities of being the finest the northwest has ever had. The WCTA conference has attracted up to about 200 attendees for the past two years, which is about the same as the NTA. Through a combined effort, we should be able to bring in at least 400 people to this conference.

There will be an interesting program for everyone in all phases of turfgrass management. In addition to general turfgrass items which include golf courses, parks, cemeteries and other turfgrass areas, a few special program topics are devoted to the parks management personnel. Parks represent a very large segment of the turfgrass industry and have some problems that are specific to their type of management programs.

This is one conference you cannot afford to miss, so plan on being there and bring your wives for an excellent, well-planned, ladies program as well. Mrs. Doug Taylor and Miss Marjorie Todd will be working closely to see that the ladies are well looked after.

Spring Evaluation of Bentgrass Studies

By Roy L. Goss

Nutritional studies that have been conducted for the past several years, are more significant this spring than ever before. Sulfur continues to exhibit its influence on turfgrass quality from the standpoint of color, texture, turf density and *Poa annua* development. Little or no *Poa annua* can be found in plots receiving a sulfur level between 150-200 lb./acre annually. Phosphorus is a complicating factor. Plots receiving the highest sulfur levels have a minimum level of *Poa annua* regardless of the phosphorus treatment. But where phosphorus is added, *Poa annua* is greater than where phosphorus is deleted. These results are opening up a number of new possibilities for producing better bentgrass with less chance of *Poa annua* invasion.

A number of tissue analyses were performed this winter and spring to determine their level of sulfur-containing amino acids in turfgrass as a result of N, P, K and sulfur applications. Additional tissue analyses are being planned to learn more about the effect of sulfur.

Arsenic Studies

Our *Poa annua* control program with the use of Tri-calcium arsenate and Bensulide (Betasan) are now three years old. Plots treated with Tri-calcium arsenate at a level high enough to induce toxicity are *Poa* free but certain small problems are being investigated to further regulate the use of the material. High rates of Tri-calcium arsenate has resulted in thin weak turf at certain times of the year, particularly in the early spring months. The plots gained in density as temperatures rise to a point where the turf is very acceptable in color, density and other quality factors. High rates of Bensulide have decreased *Poa annua* up to 80-90% as compared to check plots. These plots do not measure up to the effect of Tri-calcium arsenate except in the other quality factors. No toxicity has been observed at this time from Bensulide application.

U.S. Golf Assoc. Honors Dr. Marvin Ferguson

Dr. Marvin H. Ferguson of Brian, Texas, was named the recipient of the 1973 Green Section Award for distinguished service to golf through work with turfgrass at the USGA meetings held in January, 1973. Dr. Ferguson's contributions in the field have been varied and important over three decades.

As a young man, his work at the USGA Green Section in Arlington, Virginia, helped to establish the usefullness of arsenical materials for herbicidal purposes and resulted in the recognition of Thiram as an effective turf fungicide. Later, he was responsible for deciding which of hundreds of grass selections should be saved and moved from the USGA's Arlington Turfgardens to the United States Department of Agriculture Plant Industry Station in Beltsville, Maryland; one of the five bluegrass strains saved was later released as Merion bluegrass. U-3 bermudagrass, was the only bermudagrass moved to Beltsville.

Dr. Ferguson's work at Texas A & M University, where he was a professor of Agronomy for 15 years, was vital in the evolvement of the USGA Green Section specifications for putting green construction, which rely heavily on his contention that matters of permeability and pore space distribution, together with the employment of textural layers to take advantage of soil water movement phenomenon, are vital criteria for evaluating putting green soils.

Dr. Ferguson has served the USGA Green Section at three times during his career, first during 1940-42 at the Arlington Station, then from 1947-51 as a Research Agronomist, and finally from 1953-68 as Director of its mid-continent region and National Research Coordinator. Since 1968, he has been President of Agri-systems of Texas, a firm engaged in consultation work and the design of golf courses. Dr. Ferguson succeeds Herb and Joe Graffis as recipients of the Green Section Award.

Moss Control Trials

By Roy L. Goss

A number of new experimental compounds have been tested for the control of lawn moss since December, 1972. Some of these new products formulated by Ortho and O. M. Scott Co., appear to be very promising for moss control.

Under normal conditions of good management, moss is not a serious problem although a certain amount can invade turf which is managed at moderate to low levels of nutrition. The names of these materials cannot be released at this time but both companies are working vigorously to register these compounds for possible marketing in 1974.

Turfgrass Field Day

Hopefully, the *Turfgrass Topics* will reach you before the Field Day. It is scheduled for Wednesday, May 23, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Western Washington Research and Extension Center at Puyallup. Plot work at the main station will be reviewed and discussed and then we shall move to Farm 5 to examine nutrition plots, pre-emergence weed control, bluegrass management plots, lawn turf plots and turfgrass disease trials.

This is your opportunity to see the research underway at Puyallup and to bring along questions you may have regarding your problems.

Turfgrass Pathology Progress Reports

By Chuck Gould

Fusarium Resistance Tests. These tests are beginning to "pay off." Twenty of the 103 varieties and selections planted in 1971 or 1972 appear to be sufficiently promising at this time to justify additional testing in larger plots at Farm 5 under various management programs. Tests on some other promising types are being expanded and space is being prepared for thirty new cultivars and selections. The variety plots will be toured during the Turf Field Day and a report will be published in the Proceedings of the next Northwest Turfgrass Conference. This project is a cooperative venture with Drs. Goss and Brauen, and is carried out with financial assistance from the U.S.G.A. Research Fund. Our thanks go to Milt Bauman and Sam Zook of the Research Committee for help in evaluating the varieties.

Fusarium Fungicide Tests in Western Washington. We haven't had enough disease in any one of the three experimental areas (one at Fircrest Golf and Country Club and two at Farm 5) to permit comparisons of the effectiveness of new fungicides and various treatments. Reports, from some Golf Course Superintendents, indicate that the alternating of fungicides (such as benomyl and Fore) is giving as good results commercially as it has done for us experimentally. (Coop. with Roy Goss.)

Typhula and Fusarium Tests in Eastern Washington. Only one area (Hangman Valley Golf and Country Club at Spokane) had much Typhula Snow Mold last winter. Almost everything tried there was effective — except for PMAS and Boron. Additional treatments were applied at Hangman and the other four golf courses (Hayden Lake, Pullman, and the University and Elks courses at Moscow) in March for Fusarium control. Results will be reported at the Turf Conference. (These tests are cooperative with Roy Goss, Al Law, Ron Ensign and the respective superintendents.)

Turfgrass Field Day
May 23, 1973
Puyallup, Washington

Winter Damage To Turfgrass Areas

You were cautioned back in the December issue of *Turfgrass Topics* to expect some winter damage following the severe freeze in the early part of December. At that time we did not know that the second freeze was to hit us in early January. Between these two deep freezes, with no snow cover and dry winds, a considerable amount of damage was done not only to the lips of bunkers, the high spots on greens, but in some areas, to almost entire putting greens. Grass was caught in a frozen condition with no cover and desiccation was severe in many instances.

Good nutritional practices can help to minimize the effects of desiccation, provided that adequate nutritional programs had been practiced. Nutritional plots at Puyallup that were in good vigor, with moderate levels of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium and with moderate to high rates of sulfur, came through the winter in much better condition than low nutrition and those without sulfur. Both sulfur and potassium will stimulate a little better winter hardiness and should be carefully regulated in nutritional work in practice.

Turf areas that suffered a considerable amount of winter kill should be vertical mowed or power raked, aerified, overseeded and topdressed with the variety needed for that particular type of management. There is nothing more that can be done. These practices should have already been carried out to strengthen weak or skimpy stands of grass.

The type of winter conditions we experienced this year occur very rarely but there is no way of predicintg when they may happen again. It is impractical to try to provide covering agents for conditions which occur so infrequently in this area. Regions which experience frequent winter desiccation can be treated effectively for disiccation injury. The important thing is to maintain a good state of nutrition with adequate soil moisture to help minimize the problem. Dry soils will freeze deeper than moist soils, so this factor alone should be guarded carefully.

Notice to Advertisers

The Northwest Turfgrass Topics is published three times per year, April, September and December. The deadline for inserting advertising into the *Turf Topics* is April 1, August 15 (for September issue) and December 1. The cost for each insertion is $6.00 per column inch. The standard ad is considered two inches in depth which amounts to $12.00 per issue.

Turfgrass Variety Trials

By Roy L. Goss

Although funds have not been developed to staff an additional research associate at the Western Washington Research and Extension Center at Puyallup, certain projects to be included with this expansion are already under way. Dr. S. E. Brauen, Agronomist at this station, is jointly working with Roy Goss and Chuck Gould to screen and evaluate approximately 200 varieties and selections of bluegrasses, fescues and ryegrasses beginning this year.

Ground has been prepared and will be fumigated as weather permits to start these grasses on clean ground. They will be evaluated for texture, color, density, disease resistance, mowing characteristics (height and frequency), response to nutritional treatment, longevity, and possibly other characteristics as they may develop.

Bentgrasses from the Fusarium resistance trials that have been going on for the past 1½ years, and appear to be superior, are being moved to Farm 5 to be placed in expanded plots to further evaluate them for mowing characteristics, disease development both with and without fungicides, nutritional treatments, and other management factors. Some of these bentgrasses responded variably to Fusarium attack but have superior textural and color characteristics to warrant further investigations from the management standpoint.

These plots will provide turfgrass managers in the Pacific Northwest the opportunity to see how these various grasses perform and provide a better basis for recommending certain varieties adapted to this region.

Plans are tentatively formulated for expanding the bentgrass trials to the dry, colder interior region of Washington to determine their response under those conditions, and particularly, as they may be affected by Typhula snow mold.

Turfgrass Field Day
May 23, 1973
Puyallup, Washington

WRCC Meeting To Be Held In August, 1973

The Second Western Regional Coordinating Committee on Turfgrasses will meet at the South Coast Field Station, a research facility of the University of California, at Santa Ana, California, on August 20-23, 1973. This is the second such meeting of this group of researchers representing the western states, Alberta, British Columbia, Alaska and Hawaii.

These meetings are designed to bring research personnel together to discuss their research programs and to benefit from the input of other researchers regarding all phases of turfgrass research in the west. It is anticipated that Roy Goss and Chuck Gould will attend these meetings and present research progress and discuss future programs since the last meeting in September, 1972.

Although the conference site is in Southern California, this does not imply that the theme will be on southern warm-season grasses. This is merely a location for the meeting and also to view the research that is being conducted in southern California by Dr. Vic Youngner and his associates. Last year, the group viewed turfgrass research here at Puyallup. This type of experience broadens the total viewpoint and stimulates broader research in the turfgrass field.

Grass Is Immortal

Lying in the sunshine among the buttercups and dandelions of May, scarcely higher in intelligence than the minute tenants of that mimic wilderness, our earliest recollections are of grass, and when the fitful fever is ended and the foolish wrangle of the market and forum is closed, grass heals over the scar which our decent into the bosom of the earth has made, and the carpet of the infant becomes the blanket of the dead.

Grass is the forgiveness of nature — her constant benediction. Fields trampled with battle and saturated with blood, torn with the ruts of cannon grow green again with grass, and carnage is forgotten. Streets abandoned by traffic become grass grown, like rural lanes, and are obliterated. Forests decay, harvests perish, flowers vanish, but grass is immortal.

Beleagured by the sullen hosts of winter, it withdraws into the impregnable fortress of its subterranean vitality, and emerges upon the first solicitation of spring. Sown by the winds, by wandering birds, propagated by the subtle horticulture of the elements, which are its ministers and servants, it softens the rude outline of the world. Its tenacious fibers hold the earth in its place, and prevent its soluble components from washing into the wasting sea. It invades the solitude of the deserts, climbs the inaccessible slopes and forbidding pinnacles of mountains, modifies climates and determines the history, character, and destiny of nations.

Unobtrusive and patient, it has immortal vigor and aggression. Banished from the thoroughfares and the field, it abides its time to return and when vigilance is relaxed, or the dynasty has perished, it silently resumes the throne from which it has been expelled, but which it never abdicates. It bears no blazonry of bloom to charm the senses with fragrance or splendor, but its homely hue is more enchanting than the lily or the rose. It yields no fruit in earth or air, and yet should its harvest fail for a single year, famine would depopulate the earth.

Ed. Note: Written by the late Senator John J. Inglis, a politician who knew the importance of grass.

International Turfgrass Conference Set for June

By Roy L. Goss

The Second International Turfgrass Conference will be held at Virginia Polytechnic Institute at Blacksburg, Virginia, from June 18 through 21, 1973. Drs. Roy L. Goss and Charles J. Gould will attend this conference and present papers from research projects conducted in the Pacific Northwest.

There will be about 100 speakers and separate papers presented including turfgrass breeding, evaluation and performance, nutrition and fertilizers, turfgrass environment, turfgrass soils and their modification, turfgrass diseases, turfgrass weeds and insects, turfgrass culture, and turfgrasses for roadsides. This appears to cover the entire range of the turfgrass research programs internationally and should prove to be a very beneficial and enlightening conference.

Papers will be presented by researchers from U.S., Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Japan and other countries.

This is the second meeting of the International Turfgrass Society, the first being held at Harrogate, England, in 1969. The International Turfgrass Society has voted to hold their meetings every fourth year.

Comprehensive reports regarding the International Turfgrass Society meetings will be published in the September issue of *Turfgrass Topics*.

Turfgrass Research Fund Progress Report

By Al Blair

The Turfgrass Research fund is progressing very slowly in getting the necessary monies together to put the program underway. Several new contributors are on the list and we need to get the balance of the contributors to commit themselves as soon as possible.

Corvallis Country Club
Oakbrook Golf and Country Club
Sahalee Golf Club
Highland Golf Club
Northwest Association of Golf Course Superintendents (5 separate contributions)
Inland Empire Association of Golf Superintendents
Northwest Turfgrass Association
Emerald Turfgrass Farms
B. G. & P. Inc.
C. H. Kuhn and Associates
Washington-North Idaho Seed Association
Spokane Golf and Country Club
Seattle Turf and Toro
Spokane Inland Turf and Toro
Puget Sound Seed Co., Inc.

It would be a help if the turfgrass management people would keep the above contributors in mind when making their purchases. It will help those who are supporting the research program.

Other contributors to this worthwhile research program will be listed in future editions of *Turfgrass Topics*.

NORTHWEST TURF ASSOCIATION
1000 N.E. 135th
Seattle, Wash. 98125

Dr.James B. Beard
Dept. of Crop Soil Science
100 Soil Science Blg.
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

Officers of the Northwest Turf ASSOCIATION

John Zoller ..... **President**
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Communications concerning content of this paper should be directed to Dr. Roy Goss, Editor, Western Washington Experiment Station, Puyallup, Washington 98371.