

# Northwest TURFGRASS TOPICS

Vol. 19 — No. 1

PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON

APRIL, 1976



## The President's Corner

By John Monson

So far this year, we have had some interesting financial developments. The Northwest Turfgrass Association seems to be recovering with a strong showing of new members. This is really helping our treasury, and anyone who has brought in new members deserves a big thank you. This increase in members aids only the general treasury and does not reflect on the Special Research Fund which is not coming in very fast and we need all the help in the way of contributions, grants or any money making ideas that we can get.

Our association needs to branch out into several areas for new members other than golf courses. Much of the research work done at the Research Center in Puyallup is passed on to the park departments, school districts, cemetery and other privately owned sports centers, but not many of these groups names show up on our roster of members or on the Northwest Turfgrass Association financial reports or on the contributors list to the Special NTA Research Program of which Mr. Tom Cook is doing such a great job.

It seems only fair that even though the research center must respond to any citizen tax payer with a turf problem, many of the larger organizations should help to support this program financially. The membership of the Northwest Turfgrass Association would not only help them with educational information at our conferences, but would help to strengthen our group to combat the financial squeeze the State Legislature is putting on Washington State University to cut back on programs. If we have several hundred people representing many different areas of recreational and commercial turf areas such as golf course (private and public) parks departments, cemeteries, sports fields, sod growers, homeowners, industrial parks, just our membership numbers, and the dollar value and acres of land

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## Annual Turfgrass Field Day

The Turfgrass Field Days for 1976 will be conducted on May 12, 13 and 14. May 12 will be devoted entirely to the interests of golf course superintendents and golf course maintenance personnel. We urge all of you on golf courses to bring along the chairman of your green committee, your golf professional, club president, manager or anyone else you wish to bring who is interested in golf course-type turf. Discussions will be centered around varietal response and evaluations, topdressing programs, old and new nutritional programs, disease and weed control programs. Considerable expansion has been made since last year and a number of new things will be observed. Plan now to bring out your group for discussions and observations of our research program. The golf course field day will begin promptly at 9:30 a.m. at the main research station on West Pioneer and we shall try to complete by 12:30 in time for a no host lunch.

The general field day for all people other than golf course interests will be conducted on Thursday, May 13 and will start promptly at the main station at 10:00 a.m. A short tour will be made of the bentgrass research being conducted at the main station and then we shall proceed promptly to Farm 5 where the major part of the research program is being conducted. At this location you will see bluegrass, fescue, ryegrass and bentgrass varietal research, turfgrass nutritional programs, weed control programs, topdressing and disease control investigations. This day will be devoted to interests such as parks, cemeteries, schools, homeowners, and any other turfgrass interests outside of golf courses. Any golf course personnel who cannot make it on May 12 are welcome to attend this day as well.

Friday, May 15 will be devoted to State, County and Federal workers only. This field day is designed specifically for County Extension Agents, but other State and Federal workers are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

## O. J. Noer Research Foundation Makes Grant

The O.J. Noer Research Foundation, Inc. has approved a grant-in-aid program to the Western Washington Research and Extension Center for 1975, 1976, and 1977. The \$2,000 grant-in-aid annually will be used to further studies on *Poa annua* control with programs currently under way and new methods currently being developed. Due to the extreme interrelationship between phosphorus, nitrogen and sulfur and its effects on *Poa annua*, some interesting information should come from this project within the next three years.

We are most grateful to the Foundation for this assistance to our research project.

## Washington Turf and Toro and Toro Corporation Presents Greens Mower



Keith Gardner, representing Washington Turf and Toro, presents keys for the new mower to Roy Goss, left, and Tom Cook right, recently at the Western Washington Research and Extension Center at Puyallup. The new greens mower is donated for one-year's use and will be replaced at the end of the year with a similar mower to aid in the research program.

Washington State University is extremely grateful to Washington Turf and Toro and the Toro Corporation for this generous assistance. WSU budgets, and particularly equipment and operations budgets, are badly crippled and it is inconceivable that funds to purchase such equipment will be available in the near future.

Thank you fellows. We really appreciate it.

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## Northwest Mowers and Jacobsen Mfg. Corp. Presents Mower

Art Marston, in the left side of the picture, of Northwest Mowers, Seattle, Washington, presents keys to Roy Goss, center, and Tom Cook, right, for a new 76" Turf King mower for use in research work at the Western Washington Research Center at Puyallup, Washington. John Monson, President of the Northwest Turfgrass Association, standing in rear, observes. This mower was presented for one year's use to the Research and Extension Center by Northwest Mowers and the Jacobsen Manufacturing Corporation. High speed mowing equipment such as this will reduce the man hours of mowing time with smaller mowers and will allow us to utilize shrunken budgets more effectively for labor involved in our research program.

WSU is extremely grateful to Northwest Mowers and the Jacobsen Manufacturing Corporation for their generosity. We hope that our research program is mutually beneficial to the donors of equipment and products and these donations, in return, help us to get the job done a little quicker and a little better.

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## A Cool Weather Strain of Rhizoctonia Brown Patch?

Charles J. Gould

Although the usual type of *Rhizoctonia* disease is quite widespread on turf, it has seldom caused much trouble in Washington because either the temperature or the humidity is too low. This common type spreads most rapidly at 80-85° and at a high relative humidity. Within the last few years, however, an apparent cool-weather strain has appeared, capable of attacking and persisting at temperatures at least 30° cooler than the regular strain. Typical symptoms appear in fall and persist through the winter as brown, thin, rather circular spots, usually without the traditional smoky ring. We have observed it during the past two years in our bent plots at Farm 5 (Puyallup) and Dr. G. W. Bruehl (Pullman) has also found the fungus in samples which Al Law collected from spots in the bentgrass variety plots at Hangman Valley Golf Club (Spokane) during the winter of 1974/75. Similar attacks have also been reported occasionally from other states. For example, Dr. R. W. Smiley isolated *Rhizoctonia* repeatedly from disease patches of creeping bentgrass greens during the winter and spring of 1974 and 1975 in New York. The disease "appeared as extensive mosaics encompassing the entire green". During the summers, the typical warm temperature brown patch also occurred in New York.

To date, the only pathogen we have found consistently present in spots at Puyallup is *Rhizoctonia*, but the possibility remains there may be others which have not yet been detected.

The symptoms of traditional brown patch as described by Couch (Diseases of Turfgrasses) are as follows:

"With the conditions of close mowing, as practiced for putting greens and bowling greens, *Rhizoctonia* brown patch appears as irregularly-shaped patches of blighted turfgrass. Ranging from a few inches up to 2 feet in diameter, the overall coloration of these patches is usually first a purplish green, which rapidly fades to light brown as the withered leaves dry out.

Where management practices include high mowing, i.e. home lawns, park lawns, and golf course fairways, the disease may involve areas ranging from 2-50 feet in diameter. More or less circular in outline, these patches of light brown, blighted turfgrass are usually closely appressed to the soil surface, thus creating a sunken or 'pocket' effect.

The chief field diagnostic feature of *Rhizoctonia* brown patch is evident during periods of warm, humid weather. At these times, dark, purplish 'smoke rings (or bands . . . author's note)', 1/2-2 inches in diameter, may border the diseased areas. Usually more prominent in the hours of early morning, these 'halos' may fade as the day progresses."

Nutrition levels may influence disease development as Couch points out:

"Severity of the disease is much greater in turfgrass grown at high nitrogen with normal phosphorous and potassium levels than when the plants are grown at normal, balanced fertility. On the other hand, when Phosphorus and potassium levels are increased concurrently with nitrogen, there is no measurable increase in disease development. At

Continued On Page 8

## Northwest Turfgrass Conference

By Bud Ashworth

The 1976 Northwest Turfgrass Conference will be held at the Sheraton Spokane Hotel on September 29, 30 and October 1. Those of you wishing to play golf can show up on Tuesday, September 28 to play in the golf tournament and register and get ready for the opening of the Conference on Wednesday, September 29.

The hotel is located on the edge of the Spokane river, just a short walk from the downtown shopping center. It is also next to Spokane's new River Front Park. The park has quiet river walks and the famous hand-carved Leoff Carrousel. Reservation forms for the Sheraton-Spokane Hotel are enclosed with this issue of Northwest Turfgrass Topics.

### Ladies Program

The ladies program is being planned by Pat Angove and Nancy Ashworth to show you some of the highlights of the "friendly city" and to help you get acquainted and re-acquainted with the other wives. Be sure to bring your golf clubs, walking shoes and enthusiasm to Spokane for the 1976 Northwest Turfgrass Conference.

### The President's Corner

Continued From Page 1

we represent would certainly help to get more attention in Olympia.

Another financial development that is greatly appreciated by Dr. Goss and everyone working on the turf program at Puyallup was the donation of a new triplex greens mower by Turf and Toro of Seattle and a new triplex mower by Northwest Mowers of Seattle. Both of these machines were badly needed and will enable the use of reduced budgets to go directly to research and not have to be spent on replacement of equipment. We are very grateful to these companies.

The turf field day is shaping up nicely and should be very interesting this year especially with Tom Cook's new miracle formulation and program to eliminate *Poa annua*.

Hope to see everyone May 12 for the special golf field day and on May 13 for the general field day.

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# New Research Initiated

By Roy L. Goss

In the summer of 1975 a 10,000 sq. ft. sand putting green was constructed at the Western Washington Research and Extension Center for the purposes of testing all successful programs on *Poa annua* control that we have come up with to date. Most of our previous testing has been conducted on turfgrass established on a sandy loam soil and although we may guess and suspect and rather predict what may happen on sand, we do not positively know until we test these treatments on a sand green.

This project is in cooperation with Tom Cook and we hope by the end of 1977 we can have some good data developed from the following treatments. The plots will receive urea, ammonium sulfate and Milorganite in separate plots to supply the total nitrogen. Plots will also receive various levels of phosphorus and potassium. As you recall, we can change the *Poa annua* populations by the manipulation

of phosphorus and particularly when applied in specific rates and combinations with sulfur. Plots will receive sulfur from low rates of about 50 lb per acre up to 200 lb elemental wettable sulfur annually and several combinations with bensulide and endothal will be carried out.

We would specifically like to know any interactions between sulfur and bensulide and if there is an advantage of using either material alone or in combination. Since Milorganite supplies a reasonable level of phosphorus for turfgrass nutrition, we are investigating Milorganite with sulfur, Milorganite with bensulide and Milorganite with bensulide and endothal compared to Milorganite applied alone.

Part of this study on *Poa annua* control is being supported by the O. J. Noer Research Foundation, Inc. to whom we are most grateful for \$2,000 annual support for three years.

The sand putting green was seeded to Emerald bentgrass in the summer of 1975 and is fairly mature and ready for treatment beginning immediately. This is one of the new areas you will observe at the annual Field Day and more detailed explanations regarding procedure will be given at that time. The test is anticipated to run for at least three years at which time we feel that we can make very positive recommendations regarding sulfur, phosphorus, bensulide and endothal for treatment of putting greens built on sand.

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# Dick Malpass Elected GCSAA President

Dick Malpass, certified golf course superintendent of the Riverside Golf and Country Club in Portland, Oregon, was elected president of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. Dick is the first president from the Pacific Northwest to head the GCSAA which just completed its 47th International Turfgrass Conference and Show in Minneapolis, Minnesota in February, 1976. We are both honored and pleased to have Dick as the president of this growing and most worthwhile professional organization.

As many of you may know, Dick has been President of the Northwest Turfgrass Association, the Oregon Golf Course Superintendents Association, and has served as director of the GCSAA for a number of years.

It takes a great deal of devotion and very hard work to help carry out the functions of this large organization. All of us in the Pacific Northwest should get behind Dick and give him all the support we possibly can throughout this next year to help make the 48th International Turfgrass Conference and Show, to be held in Portland, Oregon in February, 1977, a great success.

Other members of the executive committee include

Theodore H. Woehrle, CGCS Vice President; George W. Cleaver, CGCS Secretary-Treasurer; Palmer Maples Jr., CGCS Immediate Past President; and Louis D. Haines, David C. Holler, Melvin B. Lucas, Jr., Charles H. Tadge, and Gordon C. Wittenven, all CGCS as Directors.

The GCSAA educational advisory committee has selected its new committee members for 1976, and they will begin functioning in June with advisory committee meetings. Roy Goss has been appointed by President Malpass to serve on this advisory committee for the next three years.

Congratulations, Dick, we wish you much success.

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# National Recreation and Park Association Conference

The National Recreation and Park Association, Pacific Northwest District, held its conference at the Ridpath Hotel the Empire Room at Spokane, Washington on April 24 through 26. Mr. Sam Angove, Director of Spokane County Parks, coordinated the conference. This is one of the first conferences sponsored by the NRPA, to the writer's knowledge, where the heavy emphasis was on maintaining and managing park systems. It is obvious that parks must be designed and must be administered, but the real effectiveness of any park system is the appearance and utility value of this park to the public who use them.

Program speakers the first day included Dr. James Watson, Vice President of the Toro Company; Mr. Russ Rose, Sales Manager of Cushman-Ryan Division of OMC Corporation; Mr. William Speelman, Director of Product Application, Toro Corporation, Irrigation Division; Mr. John Lindig, President of the Lindig Company; Dr. Roy Goss, Turfgrass Research.

On the second day, April 25, panel discussions were conducted on "Newest in Building Materials and Facilities"

by Jerry Williams, Mike White and Bob Carter; and a second panel on "Community Sponsored Groups and Their Accomplishments" with Mr. Tom Rodgers, Mr. Harry Simchuck and Dr. Gene Bruce; and two other talks by Mr. Ben Malikuski and Mr. Jo Johnson covering the subjects of "What's New in Fertilizers" and Small Town Park Developments".

On Monday, April 26, Mr. Robert Bignold discussed "New Construction and Techniques in Valdalproof Facilities" and a panel composed of Charles Stocker, John Ballweg and Claude Morris discussed "Cooperative Use of Equipment". Mr. Thomas Bear, Assistant Personnel Director, Spokane County discussed "How to Train and Motivate Personnel". Dr. James Watson will discuss "Future Trends in Equipment and Available Programs", and Mr. William Speelman discussed "Automotive Irrigation Specifications and Their Value in the Maintenance of Turf Irrigation Systems".

This conference was one of a great deal of interest and value to almost anyone in the turfgrass industry, and particularly to those concerned with parks and recreation. This was an excellent opportunity to really get in on down-to-earth practices in parks. In addition to the conference room presentations, there were also be product and equipment displays of the new product and equipment lines.

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## Smut Invades the Bluegrass Variety Plots

Charles J. Gould\*

Last winter a "new" disease appeared in the bluegrass variety plots established by Drs. Brauen and Goss at Puyallup. At first it somewhat resembled the early stages of *Helminthosporium* leaf spot, but as the spots enlarged, it became evident that it was something different. Samples were sent to Dr. Drew Smith (Saskatoon) who identified it as a smut (*Entyloma irregulare*). This was confirmed by Dr. Ruben Duran (Pullman) who specializes in smuts. He was able to germinate the spores — perhaps the first time it has ever been attempted for this fungus.

There is very little information known about the conditions favoring attack by *Entylomas* on grasses and therefore we can not predict if more attacks will occur. However, we are optimistic in hoping that it may only be a sporadic problem. Dr. George Fischer reported in 1951 (Plant Disease Reporter V. 35 p. 88) that this smut occurred in epidemic form on his bluegrass lawn during the mild winter of 1950/51. It had not been noticed before, nor did it reoccur as a problem in subsequent years.

Couch (in Diseases of Turfgrasses) describes the symptoms as follows:

"Numerous, gray-black, angular to oblong blister-like spots develop on the leaves, and less frequently, on the floral bracts of affected turfgrass plants. Unlike stripe smut and flag smut, the epidermis of the host remains intact over the developing masses of chlamydo-spores, thus giving rise to the very characteristic 'blister' effect."

This smut was first noticed in our plots in December of 1975 and became increasingly severe during the remainder of the winter. Most varieties were infected — some severely. However, the disease rapidly disappeared as soon as the grass began growing in march, 1976.

\*Plant Pathologist, Western Washington Research and Extension Center, (Washington State University), Puyallup, WA. Project #1394.

## Research Contributions

A number of research contributions have been made since the last issue of Turfgrass Topics, but they are coming in quite slowly and at this time we are far short of our goal compared to where we should be at this time of the year. Those of you who have contributed to the research program, we are most grateful and perhaps you should take it upon yourselves to call upon friends and acquaintances to make their contributions to the program if we are to continue in 1977. We have almost enough money in the reserve right now to carry the program through 1976, but our original goal was a minimum of three years, and hopefully, four or five year program.

Any ideas or suggestions that any of you may have for making money to support this program, we shall be glad to hear from you.

Total Pacific Northwest contributions since September 1975 are \$4,438. Program needs, for Tom Cook's portion only, are \$15,000.

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# The Thatch Patch

Jim Chapman

The topsy-turvy world EPA dominates is as nebulous as ever. The mercury fungicides are still with us. After being cancelled once and production terminated, there was a change of heart. The two companies that appealed the original action are now allowed to resume limited production until a hearing is held — probably late May or early June. Alternate broad spectrum fungicides now in research and testing programs look to be 2 to 3 years away from reaching the market.

**POTPOURRI . . .** John Rogers has taken over the superintendent job at Twin lakes Country Club, Federal Way. David Gianoli moved to Green Meadows Country Club replacing John. Ralph Stading, Jr. is once again manager-superintendent at Lewis River Golf Club, Woodland. Right after David left, Ralph broke his ankle in a skiing accident. Talk about bad luck!

Across the river, Glen and Cindy Butherus have moved from Broadmoor Golf Course, Portland, to Vernonia Golf Course where they share the manager-superintendent job. Not far away, Bob Davis is the new owner of St. Helen's Golf Club in Warren.

When Multnomah County purchased Glendoveer in Portland, Jim Griffith stayed on as superintendent. After 38 years on the course, they figured he knew his way around.

Jim's son, Bill Griffith, teaches the turf program at Portland Community College and just recently also accepted the superintendent position at Mountain View Golf Club, Boring. You can bet his class will have the best on-the-job training available.

On up the gorge, Bob Randolph is new superintendent at the Dalles Country Club. Over in the high country we find Ken Johnson is new superintendent at the Bend Country Club and Skeets LaFleur is busy putting in the next six holes at Crooked River Ranch, Terrebonne. That development is surely coming along nicely.

The busiest golf architect in the PNW must be Ron Fream for sure. He is currently doing redesign work at Marysville, Washington - Cedarcrest Muni; finishing up Mint Valley, Longview, and Kayak Point, Stanwood; planning an executive 9 addition at Emerald Valley, Creswell.

Another new course coming along is Tapps Island at Lake Tapps near Sumner. Van Bonham is superintendent. Tim Wymen has replaced Van at Meadowmeer Golf Club, Bainbridge Island.

Stan Harrington is frantically whipping Wilderness Ridge into shape for the Pro-Pro in late April. It's tough enough for any superintendent to get things in shape for a spring tournament, but a new superintendent on a new course . . . Then there's easy going Bob Schoessler putting in 35 acres of sod just to keep busy in his spare time. The Dungeness Turf Farm is a family operation with a close friend as partner.

Gotta run now. Catch you next trip.

## Rhizoctonia Brown Patch?

*Continued From Page 3*

low nitrogen fertility, with normal levels of phosphorus and potassium, *Rhizoctonia* brown patch is much less severe — as compared with disease development in plants produced at normal, balanced fertility. When nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium levels are reduced simultaneously, however, disease severity is greater than when the plants are grown at normal, balanced nutrition.

Under low nitrogen fertility, pH apparently does not influence disease development. With normal, balanced nutrition, *Rhizoctonia* brown patch is more severe in the acid range; while at high nitrogen fertility, development of the disease is greater in the basic, or alkaline, range.

Rhizoctonia brown patch has been observed to occur most frequently, and with greater severity, on short cut turfgrasses. This is thought to be due primarily to the more abundant and uniform supply of woundtype infection counts as the result of frequent mowings."

Many fungicides (Fore, Daconil, Fungo, Tersan 1991, etc.) are recommended in Washington for the regular brown patch and are worth trying if the cool weather strain becomes sufficiently severe (See WSU EM 2050).

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## Pity the Poor Student

by Roy L. Goss

Those of you who attended the Golf Course Superintendent's meeting jointly between Oregon and Washington on Monday, April 5, heard Dr. Bill Knoop discuss golf course superintendent certification programs and the need for continued education among all professional people. Also, you have heard the writer continue to plead with those of you in the field, whether you be in golf courses, parks, cemeteries, schools, or whatever, to utilize trained persons for filling jobs with great responsibility. At the present time Washington State University is graduating four or five excellent quality students with majors in Agronomy with specific interests in turfgrass management. These men should develop into top-notch turfgrass managers if they are given an opportunity to work with those of you who have practical experience as well as technical background to help take the rough edges off their confidence.

The following article was borrowed from the Mid-Atlantic Newsletter and in my opinion has a real message. At least the article points out that we must be frank, honest and fair with students who want to go into this field with technical education.

"When was the last time you hired a turf student — Mr. Superintendent? I am not speaking of the summer time person that is gone in the fall. I am speaking about the turf school graduate. Many of us have hired summertime placement students from turf schools, but these individuals leave and go back to school and don't present a problem to us as far as having to lay them off for the winter. The turf school graduate is another problem. Consider what you have done for that summer student. You have helped to well round his education by giving him some valuable field experience. You have given him a little more attention and responsibility than the average crewman. You have made him want to be a superintendent of his own course some day. You have imparted some of your knowledge to him and in return you have had some more technically oriented labor. Now it is one year later and you have a turf school graduate at your door. What now — Mr. Superintendent? What are you going to do for that kid you encouraged last year? What if you had two or three of the students? Are you going to hire this technician in May and lay him off next winter? Unless you are looking for an assistant, or planning to build a smaller full time crew from students, you have a problem. It is not feasible to keep these students all year unless you have room or a large budget. You probably already have the nucleus of a good crew that's been with you for some time. You have just burst that kid's bubble.

"Maybe we as superintendents could help to relieve this situation by reviewing our position on hiring students. Ten years ago the industry was screaming for qualified people to maintain golf courses. Those of us coming out of school back then had unlimited opportunities. This is not the case today. For the last 10 years many colleges have been pumping out turf students and now the supply far exceeds the demand. For example, out of eleven students graduating from the two

year program at the University of Maryland, only two have jobs as assistants or better. As we all know, the Superintendents Association aids deserving students by awarding scholarships. We also give many dollars to fund turf research and create a better atmosphere for our students. What can we as superintendents do to help ease this frustrating situation for the students? This is a very good question with very few good answers. The next time a young person comes to you for advice on a Golf Course Superintendent's career, be honest with him and yourself. Sure, you love your field of endeavor, you'd have to, to stay in this business, but think before you talk. Don't build this kid up for what might be a big let down. When you talk to this young person, don't tell just the good parts, point out to him that the bad days sometimes outnumber the good. Tell him that a good portion of your life is spent on that golf course and that its a truly dedicated person that becomes a superintendent. If possible, have this individual work with you before he enters school. Check out his working habits, see if he's got what it takes. Be honest with him, if you have any doubts about him, discuss it with him. This business isn't for just anyone. If he's not ready, tell him; you will be doing him a favor. If you really think he's ready, push him, he'll overcome any obstacle if he really wants it.

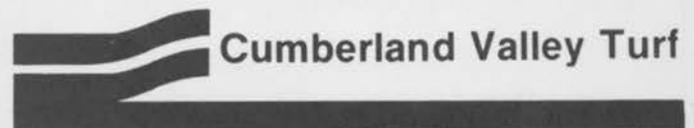
"The only good way to stop the overcrowding is to encourage the exceptional individual."

The article cited was written by Wayne Evans.

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