



## ADVERSITY SHOWS UP WEAKNESSES

*Reprint From USGA Turf Letter—August, 1959*

Weather this past Winter and Spring has been odd, unpredictable and severe. Seeds, in many cases, have failed to produce plants and recovery of damaged turf has been discouragingly slow. It seems that during the past 4 or 5 seasons we have heard an increasing number of complaints and comments about damage of some sort or other to the putting surface and the inability of turf to heal or recover from damage. It is entirely possible, in most of these cases, that greens which were designed and built 20 to 40 years ago for a small amount of play, perhaps no more than 50 to 70 rounds a week, are simply unable to stand up under present day demands of 200 or more rounds a day. Reasonable cupping areas on many of these old greens are restricted to one or no more than three areas; soils are layered, hard and compact; surface and subsurface drainage is limited or nonexistent. Is it not true that *Poa Annua* and other undesirable species of plants have encroached and covered the most used cupping areas?

Consideration of these various factors reveals the reasons why it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain greens in top shape. The conditions are such that greens just cannot stand the "traffic."

Many clubs faced with conditions and circumstances such as those described have initiated and are following a long range redesign and rebuilding program. Perhaps the time is ripe for other clubs which have greens problems to consider a rebuilding program. Through basic research sponsored by the USGA Green Section, we have acquired a greater knowledge of the factors which must be considered in the building of a green. This knowledge permits the construction of greens so that they continue to provide drainage and to resist com-

## YELLOWING OF BENTGRASS

By NICKY A. SMITH

*Extension Specialist in Plant Pathology  
Michigan State University*

A persistent yellowing of bentgrass on greens which does not respond to regular chemical control has been reported this Spring. The leaves yellow and die even under seemingly cool conditions.

Several plugs of turf have been submitted for examination. No particular fungus could be observed. However, when subjected to moist conditions for some time, profuse developments of conidiophores was produced with conidia (spores) on leaves. The spores are of some *Helminthosporium*. They have a marked resemblance to ***Helminthosporium Sativum***.

It is possible that the term "Melting out" is used to describe this condition. "Melting Out," is not a good term, because different authorities have used this term for different causal organisms. Dr. F. L. Howard attributes the cause of "Melting Out" to various species of *Curvularia*. Others feel that *Curvularia* in turf is a secondary pathogen. Dr. H. B. Couch attributes the cause to ***Helminthosporium Vagans***, in common leaf spot on common Kentucky Blue Grass. Still others refer it to various unspecified species of *Helminthosporium*.

Mercuries do not seem to satisfactorily hold this disease in check. Other chemical combinations are said to be effective against various and unspecified *Helmenthosporia*. Not enough information is available to single out any specific chemical. All of this points to the need for a much closer study than has been possible.

Anyone planning to rebuild greens should investigate the latest methods and information available before proceeding. This undertaking, especially when considering the heavy and constant traffic a green is expected to support, has ceased to be a "hit and miss" or "guess work" project.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By ROBERT PRIESKORN *Western Country Club*

Halfway home, the fight is still on to make it grow, but the tide has turned and the pressures have eased as nature has begun to give up a little of her water reserve.

Many things come to mind in a season such as this, one is that of research to come up with an answer to better wintering for turfgrass. The golf course superintendent in the Northern and cold climate areas has a continuous repair and make ready job, that is; to repair the damage of winter kill and to make ready for the coming winter.

The "Expert" of today has become not only a slave to maintaining good turf but he must also be a designer and drain engineer. The sport of golf is bursting at the seams and the facility of yesteryear has become too small to accommodate the ever growing herds of golfers. Greens of two to five thousand square feet are traffic worn and just will not stand up under the tremendous beating of the multitude of golfers that pass over them annually. There is of course the new mechanical turf devourer, the golf cart. The balance in research has not yet been attained, as the game is made more and more easy for the player, the job of keeping up the arena is becoming more and more difficult.

Another thought that comes to mind is one of educating the player to do his part in the upkeep of his course. The player can make the superintendent or break him by merely doing his part or not doing his part. What is the player's part? He should be ever mindful of repairing any damage he might do to the playing surface of the golf course. As simple a thing as raking a sand trap or replacing a divot may cut hours of work off the heavy maintenance schedule of the superintendent. Caddie education would be helpful. The most helpful contribution the player can make is that of a reasonable and understanding attitude toward the man who has the task of keeping the field in playing condition.

Still another thought is one of wonderance. How many people are aware that the upkeep of a golf course is a seven day week from Spring to Winter. The people in the turf raising business see very little of Summer. That statement sounds screwy but it is true, they are so busy trying to make it grow that they don't have time to go.

"The course is in fine shape," is probably the kindest words a golf course superintendent hears all year.

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**"THE GOLF COURSE EXPERT" IS DEDICATED TO UNITE ALL WHO STRIVE TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN BETTER GOLF COURSES, BY CONCERTED EFFORT.**

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### EDITORIAL:

## WHO TAKES THE BOWS?

As Superintendents survey the aftermath of one of the most critical Winter and Spring seasons in the history of the, Great North West, (turf world), we cannot but wonder how they pulled this one out of the bag.

If we were to list here the odds they faced in March, it would be enough to send the hardiest of men scurrying for the bush. Not only was nature at odds with this man of, now; unbelievable powers, but the critics had a field day.

Mistakes were as common as blades of grass, (of which there weren't too many), but only a man pressing to win the battle would not have time to stop and count.

Many things that were once routine to the point of boredom, were let to slide as the Superintendents waged a fight to grow turf.

May, broke the Winter spell with draught and heat waves, bringing the impatient golfer to the starting post. When the golfer hit the first tee nature had to take a back seat to the beating they were about to inflict upon the man in the arena.

Those once cheering, back slapping nice guys suddenly became the Mr. Hydes of turfdom. There was no complaint too trivial, to bring out the soap box.

Now it is all but forgotten by the golfer as once more he takes a large divot of lush turf and sends his ball in flight to a smooth target. One man still remembers, for in most cases — he went it alone.

To quote, Teddy Roosevelt, "It is not the critic who counts. Not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man actually in the arena. Whose face is marred with dust and sweat and blood. Who strives valiantly and comes short again and again. Who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions and spends himself in a worthy cause. — Who, in the end, knows the triumph of high achievement; and if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory or defeat."

## POA ANNUA TAKES A HOLIDAY

By RICH NAVARRE *Forest Lake Country Club*

Recently it was my pleasure to join Mr. James Holmes, Agronomist with the United States Golf Association, Green Section; Mr. Eugene Johanningsmeier, Agronomist and President of The Michigan Turf Foundation; Mr. S. K. Thingstad, Board of Directors, Orchard Lake Country Club and Mr. C. F. White, Superintendent, Orchard Lake Country Club, on a tour of seven golf courses in the Greater Detroit Area.

The purpose of the tour was to survey the amount of winter damage to turf on golf courses and to discuss the cures and problems of the restoration of the damaged areas.

It was concluded that the major turf kill or damage by winter was of the Poa Annuua plant.

Poa Annuua, is a winter annual plant that thrives in a moderate climate and replenishes itself by seed. Watering systems have been a boon to Poa, for in the past the heat of summer sent Poa scurrying on its way. Poa seems to do well at any height of cut, thus the increase of watering and the weakening of more desirable turf by low cutting finds Poa the emerging "Champ."

Blue Grasses and other golf course turfs are vigorous and colorful at a height of 1 to 1½ inches. It was quite evident by looking at the lush growth in the rough areas, that the perennial grasses survived the winter quite well. In contrast the Poa laden fairway areas were quite lean indeed.

Putting greens that had been renovated recently and resurfaced by the superintendent, with a true strain of bent, stood out like jewels, whereas Poa infested greens were very lean.

I wonder if perhaps Mother Nature has taken time out to give turfmen a warning, that perhaps maintenance practices have become a dictate of the golfer and that the wisdom of good turf management has been shelved by the "Experts" to meet these dictates. Some turf experts say the Poa is here to stay and that we should try to live with it. What do you think?

## JULY 10 PICNIC DATE AT BURROUGHS

Superintendents George and Harold Prieskorn will host the annual picnic at Burroughs Farms on July 10. The Superintendents and their whole family are invited to come and spend the day, fishing, boating, golf and many other recreational facilities will be available for a day of fun.

**JULY 31 — Oakland Hills Country Club**  
Supt. Howard Jones

**AUGUST 21 — Walnut Hills Country Club**  
Supt. Les Peck

**SEPTEMBER 11 — Spring Meadows Golf Club**  
Supt. Bic Bennett

**OCTOBER 2 — Barton Hills Country Club**  
Supt. Louis Senelli

**OCTOBER 30 — Maple Lane Golf Club**  
Supt. Clarence Wolfrom  
Annual Meeting (Election)

### **DR. FRED ADAMS, GREEN SECTION CHAIRMAN**

Fred (Fritz) Adams, M.D., has been chosen to succeed Charles Chapman as the Chairman of the Michigan Golf Association Greens Section.

Fritz is the President of Orchard Lake Country Club, which boasts one of the most progressive Superintendents in the business. The Doctor has been a prominent figure in the turf world for a number of years and is very aware of the problems faced in the management of golf courses. He recognizes that the golf course superintendent is a professional and deserves the full credit of his station.

At a recent meeting of the Michigan Superintendents, Dr. Adams received the robes of his new position, presented to him by Robert Howell, and gave a talk on green chairmen and superintendent relations.

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# TURFGRASS DISEASES

By EUGENE JOHANNINGSMEIER

During the summer months grass is plagued by many diseases. From the number of calls we have had in the past two weeks, this time must certainly be here.

Creeping bentgrass may be attacked by Anthracnose, Blind seed, Brown stripe, Copper spot, Ergot, Fairy rings, Fusarian patch, Fusarian root rot, Helminthosporium leaf spot, Nematodes, Pythium blight, Red leaf spot, Red thread, Rhizoctonia brown patch, Rust, Sclerotinia dollar spot, Septoria leaf spot, Slime molds, Covered smut, Flag smut, Striped Smut, Typhula blight and Zonate eyespot. This impressive list should be sufficient to prevent any bentgrass from growing anywhere. Fortunately, all of these diseases are not active on bentgrass in our area; and many of the others that are capable of attacking bentgrass in this climate are easily controlled.

Blue grass diseases are more common in our area. The following is a list of diseases that will attack Kentucky Blue grass:

Anthracnose, Ascochyta leaf spot, Blind seed, Brown stripe, Cercospora eyespot, Choke, Ergot, Fairy rings, Frost scorch, Fusarium patch, Fusarium root rot, Gray leaf spot, Helminthosporium leaf spot, Melting-out, Nematodes, Ophiobolus patch, Powdery mildew, Pythium blight, Red thread, Rhizoctonia brown patch,

Rust, Sclerotinia dollar spot, Selenophoma leaf spot, Septoria leaf spot, Silver top, Slime molds, Smut, Typhula blight, Winter crown rot, Zonate eyespot.

You will notice that many of the diseases that attack bluegrass also attack bentgrass and fescue. The list of diseases attacking fescue and other species of grass such as Red Top, Ryegrass and so forth is almost as impressive as the ones for bentgrass and bluegrass. Fortunately, there are several broad spectrum fungicides on the market today that will control most of the known diseases.

One of the newest fungicides that is a broad spectrum is Dyrene. This fungicide effectively controls most of the serious diseases and is highly recommended because of its safety both to the user and to all types of grasses. You may know that if you have applied any form of mercury to Merion Bluegrass it is not a wise thing to do. Mercury very seriously injures Merion Bluegrass which is an unsatisfactory indirect method of controlling disease since you must have grass to have disease.

There are several management practices which may either contribute to or help eliminate turf disease. One is fertilization. Grass fertilized with proper quantities of controlled

released Nitrogen materials such as the new UF fertilizers will not have the lush growth immediately after application and will form a healthy, more vigorous turf that is better able to resist disease. Since most diseases require a minimum of ten hours of 100 per cent moisture for incubation before infection can occur, all watering should be done early in the morning or during the day so that the grass has adequate time to dry off before sundown. For the real lawn enthusiasts it would be a good practice to take a fiberglass fishing pole or bamboo pole and remove the dew from the grass early in the morning. This is done on golf courses and allows the grass to dry off earlier in the day thus reducing the opportunity for disease infection.

The most frequent disease observed in the past two weeks have been Fusarium on bluegrass.

It has been especially bad in lawns cut with rotary mowers since the cut is not clean and does not heal over as quickly as one cut with a reel type mower.

Before the last few days of cool weather several cases of pythium and melting-out were also observed. The new fungicide Dyrene would be a very safe chemical to use for the problems we have had thus far. Acti-dione is also effective against these diseases.

A further report on grass diseases will be forth coming in a later issue.

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