



UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

Southern Turfletter

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PROTECT NEWLY PLANTED GRASS FROM SOD WEBWORMS

Sod webworms are rarely seen, but they probably are the most harmful of all the insects that infest putting greens in the South. They are almost certain to attack newly planted putting greens within four to eight weeks following planting.

These insects appear to have a preference for the fine-leaved strains of bermudagrass. Tifgreen, Sunturf, Texturf 1F and Bayshore (Gene Tift), have all been severely attacked shortly after planting.

The damage caused by sod webworms is difficult to recognize. The worms are small (1/2" to 3/4" in length) and the feeding of a single worm requires very little leaf material. However, the presence of large numbers of them can seriously delay the process of getting a newly planted green into play. After a green is established, damage may first be recognized by the appearance of small dead areas (about half the size of a dime) that cause the color of the green to be poor. From a distance the green may appear to be suffering from drying.

Fortunately, sod webworms are easy to control. DDT, chlordane, dieldrin, and aldrin are the more commonly used insecticides. Apply these materials at the manufacturer's recommended rate for leaf feeding insects. Spray the insecticide on the foliage in late afternoon or evening and allow it to remain overnight. Wash into the turf the following morning. This treatment should be repeated at intervals of 7 to 10 days in order that succeeding broods of hatching larvae may be controlled.

TURFGRASS CONFERENCES

September 16-17-18 -- University of Florida Turfgrass Conference
McCarty Hall, University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida

October 9-10 ----- Louisiana Turfgrass Conference
Southwestern Louisiana Institute
Lafayette, Louisiana

HOW MANY SPRIGS SHOULD YOU PLANT?

It has been found that there is a great deal of variation in the amounts of vegetative material used in planting putting greens to the improved strains of bermudagrass. The common practice is to speak of the number of "bushels" of stolons to 1000 square feet. The first question then is - "How much is a bushel of sprigs or stolons?"

If it may be assumed that the nursery is mowed at 1 inch and that the sod is cut 1/2 inch below the soil surface, the sod of planting material is 1-1/2 inches thick. A square foot of this sod contains 216 cubic inches. ($12 \times 12 \times 1.5 = 216$). Ten square feet of this kind of sod will measure 2160 cubic inches. A bushel measure contains 2150.42 cubic inches. Therefore 10 square feet of sod is almost exactly 1 bushel. As the thickness of sod varies, the number of square feet required to make a bushel will vary accordingly.

It is usually important to a golf club for newly planted greens to become playable just as soon as possible. Therefore a club will often plant greens at a rather heavy rate in order to assure rapid coverage.

The following figures may furnish a guide in determining rates of planting:

- Minimum rate - 2 bushels to 1000 sq. ft. or 1 sq. ft. of sod to plant 50 sq. ft.
- Medium rate - 4 bushels to 1000 sq. ft. or 1 sq. ft. of sod to plant 25 sq. ft.
- Heavy rate - 8 bushels to 1000 sq. ft. or 1 sq. ft. of sod to plant 12 sq. ft.

Rapidity of coverage depends upon a great many other factors in addition to the amount of planting material. Generous applications of fertilizer should precede planting. Broadcasting of sprigs on the surface is the practice usually followed. One half yard or more of well-screened topdressing per 1000 square feet should be applied following the distribution of sprigs. The surface of the soil should be kept moist until sprigs are well-rooted. As a matter of fact, sprigs should never be allowed to wilt from the time they are taken up until they begin growth.

The amount of vegetative material used in planting will depend upon the size of the nursery maintained or upon the availability of funds for purchase of sprigs. It is believed, however, that when plenty of material is available for planting, quicker results will be obtained by the use of heavier rates of broadcast sprigging.

Tifgreen rates high with rabbits

Gordon H. Jones, former Green Section agronomist who is with the Southwestern Division of the Corps of Engineers, planted a number of the improved bermudagrass strains in his lawn for observation. He reports that rabbits pass up the other grasses and concentrate on the Tifgreen. Apparently Tifgreen is more palatable than the other selections.

PLANT BREEDERS SEARCH FOR BETTER GRASSES

Dr. Felix Juska, of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, reports that he plans to use irradiation techniques in an attempt to produce desirable changes in the genetic makeup of Zoysia. Dr. Juska hopes to induce a greater degree of winter-hardiness for the benefit of turf growers near the northern edge of the zone of Zoysia adaptation.

Dr. Victor B. Youngner, of UCLA, will attempt to use the polycross method in synthesizing a bermudagrass strain that may be reproduced by seed. This effort arises from the desirability of establishing bermudagrass from seed rather than from vegetative material. Penncross bent is an example among the bentgrasses of the end product of such a breeding method.

HOW MUCH NITROGEN IS ENOUGH?

Research workers have demonstrated that bermudagrass will respond (by producing more growth) to tremendous quantities of nitrogen fertilizer. Southern research workers recently discussed the problem of arrival at "practical" recommendations. All agreed that the object of fertilizing turf is to produce a good quality of turf and that clipping production and turf quality are not necessarily related.

While research workers did not agree on a solution to the problem, the Green Section believes that about 8 pounds of nitrogen per 1000 square feet per year will produce good fairway turf. If applications are spaced correctly, there will not be flushes of excessive growth nor periods of inadequate growth.

Putting greens require larger amounts of nitrogen because of more irrigation, the removal of clippings, and the higher level of maintenance required.

Henson Maples - Outstanding superintendent - Outstanding golfer

It is distressing to note that not all superintendents enjoy the game to which they contribute so much. Henson Maples does not belong to this group. He recently displayed his golfing talents by winning the Lions Golf Championship of North Carolina. Henson is the superintendent in charge of the four golf courses at Pinehurst and he is a director of the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America.

Turf Clinics

Jim Latham has participated in numerous clinic type meetings during July. He reports attendance to be good and interest to be high. The group at Fulton, Kentucky kept asking questions until about 11 P.M.

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