



UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION GREEN SECTION

Southern Turfletter

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No. 1

February - 1961

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CONTINUE THE VIGIL ON DORMANT BERMUDAGRASS

Within the next few weeks many courses will undergo their spring transition. While previous issues have emphasized disease control on dormant bermudagrass, this subject still hasn't been over-emphasized. The dormant grass provides very favorable conditions for disease activity and for this reason close observations are essential. Applications of a broad spectrum fungicide will greatly reduce the disease activity, thus enabling the grass to be much healthier when growing conditions become favorable.

BE READY - SPRING IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

During the next few weeks much can be accomplished that will ease the pressure during the rush season soon to follow. Many of these "winter jobs" have been done already. However, a second close analysis is justified.

Tree planting must be finished very soon. Late pruning and cleaning up of broken or diseased trees and shrubs may still be done, but time is short.

Mixing of topdressing, overhauling of machinery, and the repair of small tools may be done later if necessary, but the necessity for doing these jobs during the busy season causes delay and aggravation.

Check your supply of chemicals so that unnecessary delays in disease and insect controls can be avoided. Get your samples for soil tests into the laboratories soon and avoid the rush when farmers are getting their tests made. These jobs are ones with which we are all familiar but a second thought given to them is most timely.

The busy season is approaching.
Being ready for it will go a long way toward making it a successful season.

CONSIDER THE RATE

Recommended rates of chemical applications vary a great deal. Rates are based upon the nature of the active ingredient, the mode of action of the chemical, and the purpose of its application.

Insecticides act as contact poisons, stomach poisons, or respiratory poisons. Herbicides may be of the contact or the systemic type. In the case of fungicides, contact is essential, but the fungus may be active on leaf surfaces or in the crown and root zone. The amount of water needed is different, depending upon the location of the infection.

If insects or diseases attack leaves, small amounts of water are usually sufficient. With burrowing insects or with crown rotting fungi, the amounts of water must be greater. However, each problem must be met individually. The sod webworm is a good example. He lives beneath the sod and is very hard to kill even with a drench of contact insecticide. However, he comes up at night to feed on grass leaves so that a relatively light rate of insecticide sprayed on the leaves will control him.

OVERSEEDING RESULTS

The overseeding of cool-season grasses in putting greens in the southeastern part of the United States during the fall of 1960 has been rather discouraging in many cases. Even where good stands were experienced in the beginning, large bare areas of thin stands now prevail.

Among the causes of bad results are excess traffic, failure to change the cups often enough, faulty irrigation practices, disease, improper use of chemicals, and lack of sunlight (competition of trees). Of the causes observed above, irrigation practices have played a big part in poor stands of overseeding. In many cases the feeling has been that during the winter months irrigation is not necessary to maintain growth. Much ryegrass in the Southeast has been lost during a drought in November, December, and January. Courses that overseed fairways and usually have a nice green color, now have brown fairways. This is especially true of courses that rely solely on rainfall to furnish the water. Those that have irrigation systems, as a whole, have sufficient ryegrass coverage on the fairways and tees.

Frost and ice conditions have existed for considerable periods in the upper South. The courses may anticipate heavy play as soon as weather conditions are permissible. With anticipation of disease activity, it is advisable that greens be sprayed with a mercury material as soon as the snow and ice have melted. Heavy use of greens has been very damaging, especially where moving of the pin has been infrequent.

OBSERVATIONS IN THE BAHAMAS

Courses in the Bahamas have a 12 months maintenance period as many of our courses in the South. The use of the courses is very seasonable. Most of the play is from October through April.

The sod webworm is a constant 12 months pest. During January the activity of the sod webworm in the Bahamas was as bad as in the States during the spring and summer.

The management of water is extremely important and in most cases the salt content runs high. Many shallow wells are used and can be pumped very slowly. If too much water is taken out the salt content will rise very fast. The water wells are very shallow and most of the water is pumped from less than 20 feet. Windmills are used for pumping water near Nassau and if the wind ceases to blow, no water will be pumped. Fortunately, the prevailing winds keep the windmills pumping. The reason windmills are used is that large pumping facilities proved unsatisfactory in that they would remove the good water too fast and salt water would rush in and would be unusable.

Tifgreen is very popular on the greens and the fairway grass in most cases is common bermudagrass. Some courses have introduced the new selections but where irrigation of a fairway is not feasible, the common bermudagrass population seems to be increasing.

It has been the usual practice to overseed bermudagrass for play during the tourist season but with the introduction of Tifgreen and Gene Tift some of the fellows are finding that overseeding is not necessary. The mean low temperature is in the low 50's.

COMING EVENTS

- February 27-28.....Southern Turfgrass Conference
Peabody Hotel
Memphis, Tenn.
- March 1.....Tri-State Turfgrass Conference
Knoxville, Tenn.
- April 10-11-12.....Southeastern Turfgrass Conference
Georgia Coastal Plain Experiment Station
Tifton, Georgia

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