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UNITED STATES GOLF ASSOCIATION
GREEN SECTION
Southwestern Office



Texas A & M College

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

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Southwestern Turfletter

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PLAN NOW TO ATTEND A TURF CONFERENCE!

You may be still carrying on the "summer struggle" to keep your turf in good condition, but the season is advancing and autumn will soon be upon us. Then you can relax a little and begin making plans to do your job more efficiently and more easily next year. With autumn come the educational conferences. Green Committee chairmen and golf course superintendents should plan to attend at least one such conference. It helps to swap experiences with your neighbor and you can't fail to pick up some helpful information.

New Mexico - The first turfgrass conference will be held at New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts in Las Cruces, N. M., on October 6-7, 1955. Professor Clarence Watson of the Agronomy Department is in charge of the program. Mr. Watson informs us that several well-known turfgrass authorities are on the program.

Kansas State College will be host to the annual Central Plains Turfgrass Conference on October 19-21. Registration and conference headquarters will be at the Wareham Hotel in Manhattan. Chester Mendenhall is program chairman. For further information write to Mr. Mendenhall at Mission Hills Country Club in Kansas City or to Dr. Wm. F. Pickett, Department of Horticulture, Kansas State College, Manhattan, Kansas.

The Oklahoma Turfgrass Conference is scheduled for December 7, 8 and 9, 1955. Conference headquarters will be in the Student Union building. Herb Graffis, editor of Golfdom, will be the featured speaker at this conference. For further information write to Bob Dunning, Box 4127, Tulsa, Oklahoma, or to Dr. Wayne W. Huffine, Department of Agronomy, Oklahoma A. & M. College, Stillwater.

The 10th Annual Texas Turfgrass Conference will be held at the Memorial Student Center on the Texas A. & M. College campus at College Station, Texas on December 12, 13 and 14, 1955. Dr. Ethan Holt, of the Agronomy Department, is chairman.

ANOTHER WORD FOR IT

Many of us have seen grass turn blue and wilt when the soil is very wet. For want of a better term we have called this condition "scald." Don Likes, superintendent at Hyde Park Golf & Country Club in Cincinnati described and discussed this condition in the August issue of "The Green Breeze", official publication of the Greater Cincinnati Greenkeepers Association. Let Don tell you in his own words.

WET WILT

This condition exists where the soil is saturated with water, yet the grass is dying from lack of moisture.

Continued rains in July kept greens in Greater Cincinnati saturated for over 5 days. This condition continued thru the week end of July 9th and 10th with most golf courses crowded with heavy play. The following Monday was a clear hot day. Greens, although still saturated with water, were starting to wilt badly, especially around previous cup areas and too often traveled routes leading off the green. This was a "wet wilt."

As we said before, the soil in our greens was saturated or deprived of oxygen for a period of about 6 days. We might ask why does grass need oxygen. It so happens that plants carry on a process of respiration similar to that of animals. If an animal is deprived of oxygen, death is certain within a few minutes. Some plants, including grass, can survive for a short time (2 or 3 days) without atmospheric oxygen.

Reduction of available oxygen reduces the rate of respiration of the roots. When the roots stop breathing they cease to function properly. To be specific there is a drastic reduction in the rate of absorption of water by the roots. So we had wet greens that were wilting and call it "wet wilt" if you like.

This condition exists in particular where players have walked on saturated greens. In fact many individual footprints from previous days can be detected. Apparently even a saturated soil contains some oxygen but where the drastically uninformed golfer has tramped, he has helped to squeeze the very last bubble of air out of the soil.

WATCH FOR ARMYWORMS

Quite often in late summer and early winter turf is damaged by the fall armyworm. Just as the name implies, these insects usually travel in armies. Sometimes as many as six broods a year occur.

Armyworms eat the foliage of any green vegetation and they can do an enormous amount of damage in a very short while. During a heavy infestation the turf actually appears to be moving because of the activity of the worms.

Needless to say, armyworms are easy to detect. They are also easy to control; but the control measures must be undertaken quickly if severe damage is to be prevented. Many superintendents in the Houston area learned this in 1953.

DDT or Toxaphene, used either as a dust or spray, will provide quick control of armyworms. Insecticidal dusts usually contain 5 to 10% of active ingredient. Either concentration of DDT or Toxaphene is satisfactory. If you use a fertilizer spreader for application the 5% dust would be preferable because it has more bulk. Sprays of DDT should be mixed using 2 pounds of wettable DDT powder to 100 gallons of water. Toxaphene sprays should contain 5 pounds of 40% wettable Toxaphene powder to 100 gallons of water.

Good coverage of the foliage with dust or spray is essential to good control.

TURF IS GETTING MORE ATTENTION FROM RESEARCH PEOPLE

The American Society of Agronomy annual meetings were held at Davis, California during the week of August 15. There is now a Division of Turfgrass Management in the Society and at the recent meetings one full day was devoted to reports of research dealing with turfgrass problems.

Fifteen papers were read and all except two applied in some way to problems that are encountered in the Southwestern Region. It is true that much of this research has not reached the point where it can be applied directly to everyday turf management but it is extremely encouraging to find so many professional agronomists concerned with turfgrass problems.

Charles G. Wilson, formerly Western Regional Director of the Green Section, will be Chairman of the Turfgrass Division during the coming year.

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