

PURPOSE: To pass on what we learn willingly and happily to others in the profession so as to improve turf conditions around the country.

"EXHALE ON THE TURNS"

Or, how to avoid inhaling that mass of black flies tailing you as you mow greens. Or, the difficulties of teaching new crew members how to properly turn a walking greens mower in black fly country.

A superintendent told me this summer that new crew members found it difficult enough to properly turn the walking greens mower and come back along side of the last pass without having to concentrate on the proper breathing sequence. But, only those that mastered the breathing sequence could survive a morning of mowing greens in his black fly country.

I wonder if one of those white dust filters that go over the nose and mouth would have helped. Can you get enough air through one of those when vigorously walking?

A THIRD PROBLEM FOR SAND TOPDRESSING

A former student of mine reminded me that in the last issue's article "HOW ARE SAND TOPDRESSING PROGRAMS FARING" I failed to mention a third problem for sand topdressing. My apologies I shouldn't have forgotten this one.

The third problem is both a plus and a minus. As you build up a sandier mixture on the surface it becomes much more difficult for seeds to germinate there. The plus is less germination of weed seeds such as *Poa annua* and crabgrass. The minus is that if you lose turf it becomes much harder to reestablish it by seeding. Which can be used as justification for establishing an adequate nursery something every golf course should have anyway.

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- TEES -

Most golf courses I visit have come a long way from the "good old days" when you teed up your ball 2 to 4 club lengths from the hole you just holed out in. In those days supposedly you took a pinch of soil from that hole for a mound to put your "featherie" on. Now we have tees at some clubs that are so finely mowed you can practice your putting on them.

There seems to be two problems with tees. They are either not large enough or in the wrong place, sometimes both. Ideally you should have 100 square feet of usable tee surface for every 1000 rounds of golf played per year. This figure should be doubled for starting holes and par 3 tees. It should be doubled again if the tee is in the shade.

The place the tee is located is either too far away or too close to the green. In some cases the green referred to is the one you left. You can play a decent length hole of golf from green to next tee on some golf courses.

Tees get rebuilt and moved a lot more than greens because it is cheaper and easier to do so. Yet as tees get larger and the quality of turf improves on them they are getting more expensive to construct. Multiple tees are becoming more common. Jack Nicklaus may put four on a hole and I have been on at least one hole with five tees. Some of Nicklaus's tees are so small you can't turn a triplex mower around on them without leaving tight rings of wheel tracks. Scattered small tees certainly look a lot better than Robert Trent Jones's "landing strips".

On a busy golf course those long landing strips are real practical. However, wide middle tees are even more practical. Most golf courses report their heaviest play is from the middle tees. The exceptions are usually courses on the short side of average for total length. Four different sets of tee markers is not a rarity although three appears to be more common. You will see five sets occasionally.

There is beginning to be an awakening among architects and golfers that even the best women golfers only hit the ball approximately 80% of the distance the same caliber men golfers hit the ball. Thus if men with a 15 handicap are hitting their second shot into a par four from 150 yards then slightly better than average women golfers should be able to place their drive within 120 yards of the green. At this distance they should be using the same club as the men for their approach shot. This means moving ladies tees a lot further forward than they currently are on most golf courses in the country.

Then we have to encourage the very young, the very old and most women to use these forward tees. The USGA may help us in this goal as it is now encouraging golf courses to rename tees forward, middle and back. On over crowded golf courses perhaps the weaker hitters should be forced to use these tees. It is no wonder that the very young, the very old and ladies often take

much longer to play the golf course. They are often playing the equivalent of 21 holes of golf even when using the current "ladies tees".

Forward tee locations can often be found which while shortening a hole create an interesting hole to play. Shortening a hole does not always make it easier to play. One forward tee location I suggested recently for a par 3 shortened the hole considerably. It put the tee next to the cart path and in the afternoon shade. Yet, left the golfer looking into the mouth of an awesome bunker. The bunker on the front right had become from this forward tee location an awesome hazard to go over for those most likely to be using the forward tees. A short lofted tee shot was now demanded over this bunker with a prevailing wind behind you to a now relatively narrow green.

If you can find or create on your golf course similar such challenging forward tee locations they will be much more readily accepted. You might even want to try them for a stag night or some other special event. Such use would help to get them better accepted by the members you would like to use them.

Care will need to be taken when selecting "forward" tee sites when a water carry occurs on the second shot. Some holes may work best if you change par for the players using the new tee. A par three may best be played as a par four for the shorter hitters. While a par four hole may be more adaptable for play as a par 3 than par 4 for short hitters. But, having the "forward" tee back on a hole will led to confusion so do not have too many of these. These will only be workable on a country club or other course where there are few strangers playing the course.

Some ideas for building or reworking driving range tees. The first suggestion is to keep the whole tee on one level if possible. Every time you add a level you lose valuable space between the levels.

The second device to aid in keeping the practice tee in constant use yet in constant repair is a well planned irrigation system. Zone the tee into a front, middle and back or four zones if you wish. The idea is that while you keep the zone being used that week dry and firm, another zone can be aerified, seeded, fertilized and topdressed. The third zone meanwhile can be kept moist to encourage seed germination and growth. A fourth zone allows more time in the rotation for recovery. Sprinklers should all be triangulated at a close spacing. The smallest practical head should be used; certainly nothing larger than the Toro 634 at a 60 foot triangular spacing. At that spacing each zone would thus be 52 feet deep.

Three such zones 300 feet across should be more than adequate for most golf courses. You should consider incorporating a chipping green and practice bunker at one end or corner.

TURFGRASS FIELD DAYS - NB, MO AND TX - It was nice to see a bentgrass experimental plot area that was maintained like an actual putting green. The green at Nebraska was closely mowed, firm and fast. Made you feel that data from there was worth listening to. A research - extension - teaching group that works together like they do is bound to accomplish big things.

Potassium the more the merrier was what Dr. Shearman said. Oh, not in those words, but he has seen no problems from three years of 8 pounds per thousand square feet in research plots on the above bentgrass green. This is over various nitrogen rates. I believe the nitrogen rates were 2, 4 and 6 pounds per thousand. Some of this is reported on in the USGA Record, July/August, '85, as Potassium - A Miracle Element.

High potassium levels increased the ability of the turf to go longer without water, he said. Also, he has seen similar results on a Kentucky bluegrass area that has been in as a research plot for an even longer time. Soil levels of potassium under the high potassium level plot in the Kentucky bluegrass area were about 3 times what the University laboratory called the high level on soil test.

TURFLON D the new broadleaf herbicide is giving control of some of those hard to kill broadleaves. It is a mixture of 2,4-D and triclopyr. The triclopyr is there to give the 2,4-D some extra clout like dicamba (Banvel-D) does for other broadleaf herbicide combination.

Good Field Day at TX A&M - Dallas. We should begin to get some data of interest and use out of that Experiment Station now. Wish they had a turf management researcher there to complete the team.

Studies in Texas find that grubs may be spread vertically through quite a deep soil profile in the spring. Most insecticides labeled for control of grubs are not penetrating much below the top 1/2 inch of soil. Therefore it is harder to kill the grubs in the spring than late summer when they are mostly near the soil surface.

Rave reviews for PENDIMETHALIN, the preemerge crabgrass herbicide that O.M. Scott has out as a granular and Lesco has available as a dispersable granule. So far have not yet heard a report of damage and all good to excellent reports of crab and goosegrass control. This herbicide has a crop label as Prowl.

However, pendimethal label has a lot of DO NOTs on it.

- DO NOT use on newly seeded or sprigged turfgrass.
- DO NOT use on winter overseeded turfgrass.
- DO NOT use on turfgrass severely thinned by winter stress.
- DO NOT use on bentgrass.
- DO NOT reseed or winter overseed turfgrass within 4 growing months after application.
- DO NOT sprig turfgrass within 5 months after application.

END