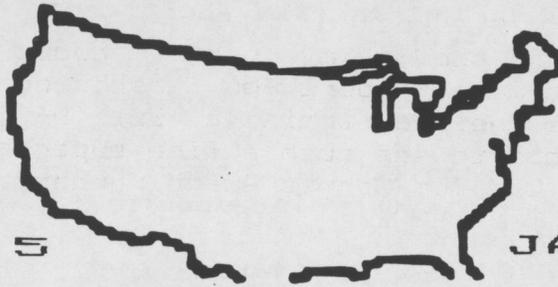


TURFCOMMS



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JAN. 6, '90

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

FLORIDA

Went there over Christmas Vacation. Goal was a family reunion and to see the Space Center, Disney World and have a warm Christmas. Well as you're all aware for two days before Christmas Florida broke some of its records for cold. I left Dallas with the temperature at 8°F., headed due south to Houston it was a warm 11 degrees there. Deep South motels are not built to stay warm when temperatures are in the teens. Many North Florida roads were closed due to ice. Florida is now brown from Orlando north. They will have recovered I'm sure by the time you GCSAA SHOW GOERS arrive in late February. Even by the end of the week day temperatures were back up into the 70s.

My wife thought the Space Center at Cape Canaveral well worth the trip. I stayed in the condo with the flu that day. Epcot Center during the Christmas vacation was not worth the \$30 admission, unless you enjoy spending 45 minutes waiting in line for a 15 minute show you could have watched on Channel 13 (PBS). I was expecting the shows at the Epcot Center to be educational. They were entertaining. One branch of the family found Disney World great for the kids with the parade being the highlight. But again the Christmas crowds made for a less than a perfect day.

I enjoyed most an afternoon watching and identifying birds at the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge with the wife and one grandchild. The Refuge was empty of people but full of birds. We finished the trip with a visit to Blue Spring State Park to

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see the manatee. This was crowded, with a short waiting line to get into the park. Hard to get excited about manatee and long nose gars but, it is an excellent park north of Orlando for a change of pace and a picnic.

FAIRWAY AERIFICATION - The problem of breaking up cores after aerifying fairways often prevents superintendents from doing this very necessary task often enough. Not only is it important to aerify but it is equally important to break up that plug and work the soil back into the turf. Why?

Because that soil worked back into the turf greatly helps in thatch decomposition and will also help to smooth rough fairways. Many devices have been recommended including flail mowers, fairway mowers with a good gap between reel and bedknife, rotary mowers, and chain harrows.

This summer I saw Olathe's core pulverizer Model 56 for the first time. It was being used behind Toro's new fairway aerifier and was doing a beautiful job of pulverizing the plugs. It appears to be nothing more than the rubber fingers of a leaf sweeper perhaps closer together on a similar horizontal shaft. The pulverizer fits on the front of a Toro out front rotary mower.

Like all devices to pulverize plugs this one works best if the soil moisture is just right - not so moist the soil sticks, not so dry the plugs are too hard. The moisture was perfect the day I was watching. There was still small pieces of plugs on the surface but you felt that with one mowing or irrigation they would all disappear into the turf.

OPHIOBULUS PATCH - I had not seen this disease until last July. Ophiobulus Patch (Take-all Patch) is most commonly associated with bentgrass and Poa annua greens of the Pacific Northwest. I saw it on bentgrass greens in Colorado. The greens on this golf course were in very good condition except that nine of the 18 had a moderate to severe infestation of this disease. Apparently the disease came in with the grass seed. It was only present on the new nine greens.

The present superintendent not knowing what it was, was unable to control it. The past superintendent had only been able to keep it suppressed. I wouldn't have figured it out if the past superintendent hadn't have left a nice set of notes.

It, like fairy ring persists from year to year with rings that each year get a little larger in size. The infected grass may range from bronze to a reddish brown.

Control of sorts has been obtained by lowering the pH with sulfur

and/or ammonium sulfate. A balanced nutrition with adequate phosphorus has been reported helpful. Rubigan has just been labeled for control at four ounces per thousand square feet.

YOU NEED A CALENDAR: As a member of Golf Writers of America I get a lot of press releases in the mail and occasionally a freebie. I recently received a copy of the eighth annual calendar produced by Mercedes-Benz of North America for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. If you would like a calendar that will give you a picture book of golf history on the wall buy it.

The 14 and 1/2 x 22-inch calendar, printed on heavy stock suitable for framing, includes 237 visuals, 112 of them in color and the rest color tinted. The calendar includes paintings and photos of artifacts from the earliest traceable days of the sport, in the 15th century.

The 1990 calendar, is available from all MS chapters and by mail from MS national headquarters. Copies can be ordered from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, 205 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y., 10017, or call 1-800-666-PUTT. They are \$35 each and are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

HOME IRRIGATION SYSTEM: Ever since moving in to this address in '78 we have wanted an irrigation system. The old hose and roller base isn't too practical for lawns in Texas heat. This spring with money from an inheritance we committed ourselves to an automatic system. I drew up a plot plan of the yard at end of the spring semester. Handed this over to a friend who is licensed to design home systems. Then I went out consulting.

By the end of June he had done the design but I didn't get to go over it till late July. I had him order and deliver the parts the last week of summer and went and rented a trencher to spend the last Saturday of vacation trenching. You might know that one of the coolest summers in Texas history decided to start breaking 100° that same day. My efficiency was not too high, but got the most of it trenched in spite of heat and my inexperience.

Made some progress installing that weekend and next weekend. Even accomplished a little during the week at night. Then teaching started and time became precious. But slowly with a little help from a student on one weekend it got 5/6s done. Then down came four inches of rain and filled one long trench but the lawn needed a good soaking by then. Six weeks from the start I turned on the controller.

Cleaning a few plugged heads, learning how to program and operate

the controller, and then adding that head missed when the dry spot showed up finished a professional's normal three day job in two plus months.

It was \$1200 well spent. It has already made it a lot easier to successfully get tall fescue seed up and going. Germinating seed in Texas without an automatic sprinkler takes, luck, a good mulch or a lot of daytime hours lightly watering. The system has been doing a fine job of irrigating the tall fescue seed put over the trenches in the back and shady north side. Being able to set a controller for three daytime one minute sets was all it took after the initial soaking. My wife and I will probably put on ten pounds next summer just because we won't have to go out and move the sprinkler every half hour one day a week.

SPEAKING OF GAINING WEIGHT: I was fat enough before the trip to Hawaii; but after two weeks of good food and great climate and I could roll faster than I could walk. My eldest daughter was on a Quick Weight Lost Center Diet and put Jane and I on a similar plan: no fats or oils, lots of water, fruit and no snacks. Well, thank goodness it worked. Two months later we're both 15 pounds lighter and although not svelte we can now walk faster than roll. Needless to say, put some of that back on at Christmas.

SHERWOOD A. MOORE is to receive the 1990, Old Tom Morris Award. I always knew he had been a great boss but, gee whiz. Congratulations Sherwood. I had the distinct pleasure of working for Sherwood in the summer of 1958 when he was preparing Winged Foot Golf Course for the 1959 U.S. Open.

My memory of that course was 36 holes all blended together. When I got there in March there were no signs at the tees or numbered flags to tell you what hole you were on. I spent most of the summer lost on what to me was an enormous golf course. My horizons were expanded from nine holes on 65 acres with a summer crew of three to 36 on over 300 acres with a crew of 20 plus.

Sherwood, was very understanding but, had trouble comprehending why I didn't have his love for construction. When I fell asleep baby sitting his children, he didn't get angry, nor the day I sprayed too close to his tomato plants with 2,4-D, or the day I used the front end loader without permission - put him to the test that summer.

We laughed together many times, once over the shop steward getting all upset because I kept working in a drizzling rain. Sherwood also laughed over some of my comments about individual crew members in my placement report for Stockbridge School of Agric., U. of Mass. He helped train a lot of East Coast Superintendents. It is good to see such a fine superintendent in that list of distinguished Old Tom Morris Award winners.

END