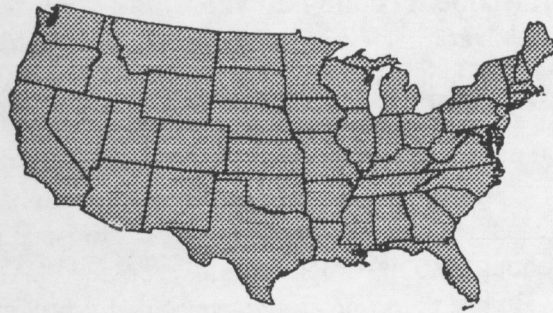


TurfComms



Vol. 8, I. 9

Oct. 14, '95

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

SODDING USGA GREENS? I'm sure that most superintendents that had or most agronomists that had been called in to examine the results would say DON'T. Yes, there are some sod growers that raise their product on a sand that meets or comes close to USGA specifications. Yes, there is washed sod. Those two should be good alternatives, I have yet to hear horror tales from their use. But the use of sod grown on sandy loam or worse yet, clay or silt loams very quickly result in a disaster. A 'great' perched water table is created by the fine textured soil now sitting on top of 12 inches of USGA mix. The top of the green is either too wet or too dry and there is very little time in the happy in between.

The solution then is well known --- punch holes and fill with sand. Make that lots of holes. So you sodded to get the greens in play quickly and now you are going to have to make them unplayable by heavily aerifying with the largest tines you can use on your machine. You need to do this often before the soil layer is buried by topdressing. I believe you will find if you do the math that one aerifying with 1/2 inch hollow tines on two inch centers removes about five percent of the surface. Thus twenty aerifications with 1/2 inch hollow tines on two inch centers should remove all of the soil that was added with the sod. **IF YOU NEVER HIT ANOTHER HOLE WITH SUBSEQUENT AERIFICATIONS.**

TURFCOMMS is published at unpredictable intervals by the editor and publisher:

Douglas T. Hawes, Ph.D.
Certified Professional Agronomist
Specializing in Golf Course
Maintenance Consulting

2408 Roundrock Trail
Plano, Texas 75075
(214) 867-0176

Subscription cost is \$15. Send checks to Doug Hawes at the above address

I write this after having just visited a golf course that sodded all their greens. When I got there they were attempting to correct the problem that had developed with 1/4 inch tines on four inch centers. **They had a big tournament coming up and didn't want to mess up the greens.** Surprisingly enough this wasn't a complete waste, the infiltration rate doubled. But, when it is almost zero a doubling isn't much help and one can assume the affect won't last long.

FLAIL MOWERS: If you are seeking a mower to do roughs with and are considering Jacobsen's HR15 flail units two superintendents I visit would definitely tell you to forget it. These units will not stand up to the task. The caster wheels will tear loose and the bearings in the mowing units are not large enough, so must be constantly replaced. A third superintendent loves it for the way it cuts rough. He has the same above mentioned problems but, two mechanics on an 18 hole course to keep it running. No complaints about the rotary mowing units for this tractor.

ANT-LIKE LEAF BEETLES: While visiting a coarse in New Mexico in late August with Poa annua/bentgrass greens I encountered large numbers of a small beetle, about 1 mm wide and 3 mm long, which I could not identify. Dr. Mike English, through the cooperation of Dr. Arden Baltensperger, identified these as Ant-like Leaf Beetles, Pedilus lugubnis, family Euglenidae. He thinks that they do little damage but, could be controlled with Dursban. To the best of my knowledge this beetle or its grub has never been identified as a turf pest in the literature. But, it sure was very numerous on these old greens. The course also has 14 new greens on which I found only a few of these beetles.

Has anybody else run into these insects? If so were they or their larva damaging?

ZOYSIA: If you missed the Forum on this grass at the GCSAA Conf. in San Francisco and are interested in knowing more about this grass order the tapes. Or if you wish borrow mine. The first tape with Joe Kennedy of the Legends Club of Tennessee, and David Stone of The Honors Course, Chattanooga area, TN is good. The second tape has too much that can't be heard because it is people in the audience talking and the microphone doesn't pick it up well. This taping takes place after the winter of 1993-94 devastated bermudagrass fairways in the Nashville and Chattanooga areas. Unless otherwise noted all comments refer to the cultivar 'Meyer'.

Some highlights are: Sand base sod was reported by Kennedy to not root well on his clay soils for the first two years after laying. Drainage is definitely needed if you want to avoid winter kill of zoysia. Dimension, Pendamethalin, Barricade, Acclaim, Basagran reported safe to use. Image can be used to take out perennial ryegrass. In Japan Simazine is used three or four times a year says Stone. He suggests rain drop nozzles for spraying Roundup (Ed. keep the pressure as low as you can for good coverage regardless of the nozzle type). You don't want to get spray down through the foliage to the green stolons below. Trimec is less damaging to zoysia in the Spring than to bermudagrass. Sencor very damaging.

Shade is a drawback in the transition zone; you can expect more thinning or winter kill where you have it. Zoysia is not overly satisfactory for shaded tees (Ed. especially small par 3s).

Meyer sod took two to three times longer to root down than El Toro sod. While El Toro on one course was reported to get two times more Patch disease than nearby Meyer. Stone said Texas A & M selections 8512 and 8514 greened up faster than Meyer; while 8507 and 8508 didn't mow very clean.

Keep carts off zoysia in the winter (Oct. 1st to May 1st)! Don't verticut zoysia; it is too slow to recover. Aerify to control thatch and leave the plugs on. Aerify in July when it is growing the fastest.

Height of cut the previous year influence spring green up. The lower it is mowed the quicker it greens up.

Zoysia patch (Brown Patch), this spring/fall disease which can be identified because the infected leaves easily pull off does not respond to Daconil. It can be controlled by Prostar at 3 oz./M in one gallon of water. Stone suggests a preventative spraying in the last week of Sept. for his area (temperature in the low 80's). He notes you may also need a spring application. He also says Sentinel appeared to give control in the Fall of 1994. PCNB works but is expensive. Stone is also seeing a Spring Dead Spot type patch and other diseases in his Meyer.

Stone has started overseeding. He has tried 200 and 400 pounds/A of perennial ryegrass and prefers the 400 lb. rate. He does no preparation and claims to have had no Spring transition problem in trials so far. He expects that he is going to have the added expense of forty more mowings each winter with overseeding. I'll bet he will lose his zoysia where it is shaded. He does note that if you are going to overseed you can not use Prograss to control *Poa annua*. He says you can get excellent control of zoysia encroachment into bentgrass greens using Prograss. He uses two and one half ounces in mid-March.

Several comparisons are made to bermudagrass for this transition area. The slow growth of zoysia is great for bunker edges and steep banks. Zoysia is not as drought tolerant, nor traffic tolerant, but, much easier to play out of two to four inch tall than bermudagrass because the ball sets up. Control of bermudagrass in zoysia is best obtained by monthly applications of Fusilade 2000 during the growing season. A rate of 6 ounces/A is used with the one pound per gallon formulation. The new formulation is suppose to be two pounds per gallon, so reduce rate to 3 oz./A. Poast and Acclaim are not as good according to Stone. Acclaim is better on common than the hybrids he says.

MANAGING TREE SQUIRRELS: Tired of squirrels burying nuts in your greens? Who isn't. An article in Common Sense Pest Control XI(4) Fall 1995, reminded me of all the damage these bushy tail rodents can cause but it didn't offer much in the way of control for those of us in the golf course management profession. It does mention that predators include snakes, cats, dogs, weasels, ferrets, hawks, owls, foxes and raccoons. Thus another reason for putting up those barn owl boxes I mentioned a few issues ago, and maybe The Country Club shouldn't be in such a hurry to get rid of their foxes. All though they to can be a pest. The article also gives ideas for protecting bird feeders.

Don't forget that squirrels aren't done damaging the course after all the nuts are buried. They still have to dig them up again in the spring and then there is their nasty winter habit of gnawing bark in the axis of tree limbs. I have seen extensive damage to elms, oaks and mulberries by winter feeding squirrels. That bark damage you see is most likely caused by squirrels not porcupines.

WHY SHOULD WE SEND OUR SUPERINTENDENT TO THE CONFERENCE?

You get asked the damndest questions by professionals in other fields sometimes. Why do you go to your professional meetings? Or, you do don't you? The bottom line is **Management should hope to gain a better level of golf course maintenance for the budget dollars being spent.**

How? The superintendent will come back better educated. There are 72 seminars available at the Orlando GCSAA Conf. and Show. He should be signed up to take one or two or teach one. He or she should come back with new ideas as there are over 650 exhibits and thus exhibitors to learn from, let alone the several thousand superintendents and many thousand other professionals in attendance. He can bring the problems he has encountered maintaining your course and have a decent chance of finding answers. He will get to see the latest technology and equipment.

Professional development does not necessitate attending the annual conference of any profession but it sure can help occasionally to see and meet with other professionals in your business. You build up contacts; people you can communicate with and thus discuss mutual problems with.

I have always felt the superintendent should be first active in his local superintendents' association. He should first, attend the state's conference and field day and then if money and time allow go to the national meeting. My attitude has been that being sent to the national should be a reward for a year of good work. However, the speakers and seminars available at the national are often so much better than available at the state level it is very justifiable to send you superintendent to the national.

Last but not necessarily the least reason is morale. The club pro and the manager both go to their respective meetings why not the superintendent? Don't you care about him. See you in Orlando.

LIGHT: We all know how important light is ---- but, do we. The Avant Gardener, Box 489, NY, NY 10028 had their October newsletter as a special on this subject. They did a good job of covering this topic for the amateur. Dwelling just a little on photosynthetic needs, while covering filtering for greenhouses, and: Mulches that reflect light up underneath the plant for insect control and increased yields, indoor artificial lights including "bringing in the sun", photoperiod effects, and effect on human health. Everything but the effects on germination. After issues like that I think this newsletter is definitely worth the \$20/year.

END

