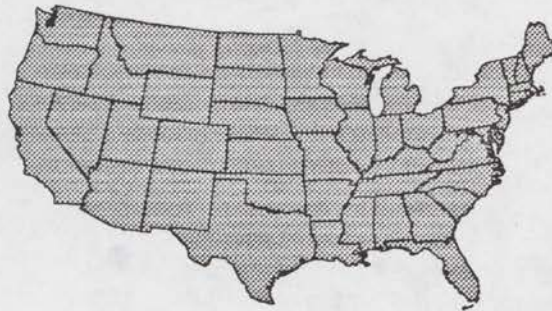


TurfComms



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

TurfComms Subscription Renewal: My new method of printing address labels necessitated changes in keeping track of when subscriptions expire. Your expiration time is typed in small print above your address, see example below. When your subscription expires I will highlight this and include an invoice for a renewal.

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Superintendent
Everywhere Country Club
1234 Country Club Lane
Anywhere, USA

GCSAA Conf. & Show continued from V10, 11

Dr. Karnok was followed by Dr. Robert Ellsworth of Vitec Industries, Plainview, TX, who also talked of **biostimulants** but his approach was different. Dr. Ellsworth first discussed the importance of humic acids and stressed that the **source** of humic acid is very important. They are best if produced in your own soil. He appeared to be pushing enzymes to stimulate the microbes in your soil so they would then go on to produce humic acids.

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He also noted that the closer the leaf angle is to the stem the greater the resiliency. And that the ratio of N:Ca:K:B should be 10:8:6: trace. Noting that calcium is very immobile within the plant. While boron is often tied up as calcium borates. (Ed. From this and other things I have read in the last few years I get the impression spraying on soluble calcium materials during the summer months might be beneficial even in Western high calcium soils.)

Dr. Ed McCoy, Ohio State Univ., discussed his experience with **soil amendments**. Results with **Axis (calcined diatomaceous earth)**, **Profile (calcined clay)**, and combinations with peat were presented. He had found that Profile and peat blends held a lot more available water than any of the above alone. That Profile was very good at reducing potassium leaching in sandy mixes. He noted that peats are a lot higher in fiber than most composts. He was surprised to learn that when composts were added to sand he did not get any reduction in permeability. (Ed. I think we can assume from my experiences that he did find a reduction in permeability when he added peat to sand.)

CAMBRIDGE DRAINAGE SYSTEM vs. NEW USGA RECOMMENDATIONS: I was listening to the irrigation and drainage session on tape and thought it was time I went on record as writing that renovating an old an poorly drained green using the Cambridge method will essentially give you a green equivalent to a new green built to USGA recommendations **if:**

If you have built up over the years on that green a three to four inch sand topdressing layer using a sand that meets USGA recommendations. **If** the old green was large enough and or had a sufficient amount of cupping space. And, **if** the cultivar of bentgrass on the greens was desirable for your needs and dominates the putting surface.

In other words it not only is a lot less expensive to renovate a green with the Cambridge system but, if the other criteria are met than this type of renovation should result in as permanent of a course improvement as tearing out and rebuilding the green correctly; and with a lot less down time in my opinion.

ZOYSIA FORUM: I thought for a while that this session was going to be dominated by Dr. Milt Engelke until late in the session Mr. Whitbeck, owner of Winrock Grass Farm, brought out a roll of Z-net.

Z-net is a method of planting sprigs and stabilizing soil together. It consists of approximately a four foot wide roll of netting with sprigs (rhizomes and stolons) of zoysia in this case trapped between two layers of netting. They have been using it in Japan for a few years now. You roll it out, stake, topdress it down, water, and sit back and watch it grow. Great for establishing zoysia on new turf areas. About 1/2 the cost of sodding.

Winrock Grass Farm in Arkansas has currently got the U.S. market, and I still owe you readers a review of Zoysia species and cultivars. Next issue maybe?

PREDATOR GUARDS for NEST BOXES: For those building cavity nest boxes for bluebirds, wood ducks, etc. the Noble Foundation newsletter for February has some good ideas on this subject. Give a call and I'll send you a copy. I filed it under Animal Repellents.

TREE PLANTING: Did you read the Jan. Grounds Maintenance article on pg. C-6, or in Tree Care Industry in April, pg. 24? The author, E. Thomas Smiley, made it clear to me that if you're planting or have planted trees in lousy soil (who hasn't) there are two preferred ways to improve that tree's performance. These are 1) radial-trench soil replacement and 2) mulching.

The radial-trench soil replacement approach involves trenching out from the base of the tree and then backfilling with the same soil amended with compost. Make the trenches as deep and wide as you can afford. Don't go too close to the tree. But feel free to go to the ball of a new transplant and then for older trees allow "6 inches for each inch of trunk diameter." Mulching is merely surrounding the tree with 2 to 4 inches of organic mulch out as far as you can get away with. Using both mulching and radial-trench soil replacement together would be ideal. Now rototilling around the tree and working mulch and fertilizer in was even better than the 1) and 2) above but I didn't think I could talk you into that one.

USGA REGION CONFERENCE - DALLAS, TX: Apparently I was not alone in thinking this program was one of the most promising the USGA has but together for Dallas in a long time. There was the largest crowd they had ever had for one at the Dallas Athletic Club. Paul Vermeulen, Green Section Agronomist, did an excellent review of both the steel spike and the countless other tests of non-steel spike golf shoes that have appeared and been tested over the last 90 years. One interesting thing to come out of this was the greater Stimpmeter speed produced by Soft Spike shoe traffic vs. steel or a control. The Soft Spike trampled plot was five inches faster (120 inches) than the steel spike trampled plot which was itself five inches faster than the control (110 inches). Apparently we are getting a fraction more surface compaction with the Soft Spike; while wear and or turf damage in the short and long run is definitely more with the steel spike shoe.

He was asked whether he felt the amount **Poa annua** in greens was being reduced by Soft Spike use. He had no data but noted that where spikes cause winter damage Poa increases. (Ed.: I would say that in the transition zone and south on bentgrass greens where the turf is thinned by anything Poa comes in during the Fall. In the Northern Tier states this can also happen as he points out, where winter traffic on dormant turf causes thinning.)

Mr. Vermeulen noted the increase in clubs going to alternate foot wear or banning steel spikes. He said movement in this direction was slow at courses open to public play because they were afraid of driving revenue away. He noted that in one community he saw a ban of steel spikes work when all these courses got together and agreed to do it all at the same time. He also claimed 60% of the Senior Tour players were now wearing some alternative to steel spikes and that the USGA is honoring club bans of steel spikes at qualifying sites.

Mike Hodges, Principal of Solomon Liquids, discussed their company's ability to **dredge out old ponds and lakes** (one acre or larger) by sucking the mud off the bottom using a vacuum cleaner like device and a flocculating process to remove clay and organic material out of the muddy water. This method allows you to leave the pond full of water while removing the mud. It also allows them to rapidly de-water the mud, one to two cubic yards/minute and thus get you usable dry mud in two to four days depending upon drying conditions. Process appears to be reasonably free of odor to. Cost is 10 to \$15/yd³. Call (303) 989-5568 for more information.

Dr. Joe DiPaola, Ciba-Geigy (now Novartis), talked on **growth regulators**. As you might guess the talk tended to emphasize some the benefits of using their product, Primo. I did find very exciting the data that showed higher root and food reserves for bentgrass in the summer. He emphasized the ability to use growth regulators to **condition turf for stress**. He also showed data on bermudagrass overseeding where use prior to an early overseeding increased the amount of overseeding grasses obtained; i.e. reduced bermudagrass competition. I got so intrigued that I called up the local tech. rep. and asked a lot of questions. The answers were interesting and I plan to publish more on the use of Primo soon.

Dr. Engelke discussed zoysia but that will be covered under that subject in a later issue. There were also other speakers not reviewed here for various reasons.

VIBRATORY ROLLERS: I heard one more use for the vibratory roller and that is for use after topdressing to help work in the sand. As I said in the original comments last issue, "I'm not too receptive to" use of rollers on greens but here is one more for what its worth and I really have strong doubts on this use. Using the vibratory roller after sand topdressing to assist in working in the sand. I asked one superintendent who had used a vibratory roller but, not for that practice what he thought about such a use. He thought "anybody using it for that purpose was smoking dope." The reasoning is from his point of view, and mine, that this is like grinding sand into the grass. It makes me feel like you would be going back to the old steel dragmat type of abuse.

BOOKS: Just finished reading Alienist by Caleb Carr. If you like historical detective stories this may be one you would enjoy. It covers the hunting down of a serial murder in New York City back in 1896 when Theodore Roosevelt was on the Board of Commissioners for the NYC Police Dept.

VEGETABLES: Cultivated Vegetables of the World a book written by Kays and Dias is one of my recent purchases. It gives the Latin binomial, common names in 15 languages, edible part, and method of preparation, with emphasis on the names. If you have eaten a vegetable in another land or as in my case found a new one that you have never heard of this is the book to at least get you started as to what you are really eating. Jicama or Mexican yam bean has been showing up at the local grocery store. A friend of my wife, Jane, told her how to use it with a dip so after trying it I had to find out what it was. *Pachyrhizus erosus* is the binomial, it is a member of the legume family, *Fabaceae*, one with a swollen edible root and poisonous seeds.

If you have a strange vegetable you need more information on drop me a line or a call and I'll look it up for you.

END

