BEARD COLLECTION

Tee to Green

Vol. III, No. 1 Published monthly by the Metropolitan Golf Course Superintendents Association March, 1974

MGCSA News:

It's been a long time since we last published Tee to Green. The highlights since then have been as follows: Our annual meeting was held at Burning Tree Country Club in November. Our host Bob Alonzi and his chairman had a new twist with a bottle of wine for the oldest Supt. in attendance, Ray Twombly, took honors. The Nominating Committee's slate was elected in one big swoop:

President—Harry Nichol
1st Vice President—Garry Crothers
2nd Vice President—Edward Horton
Secretary—Richard Allen
Treasurer—Robert Alonzi
Sergeant at Arms—Orlando Casterella
Directors—Terry Mulligan, Alfred Caravella, Robert DePenier.

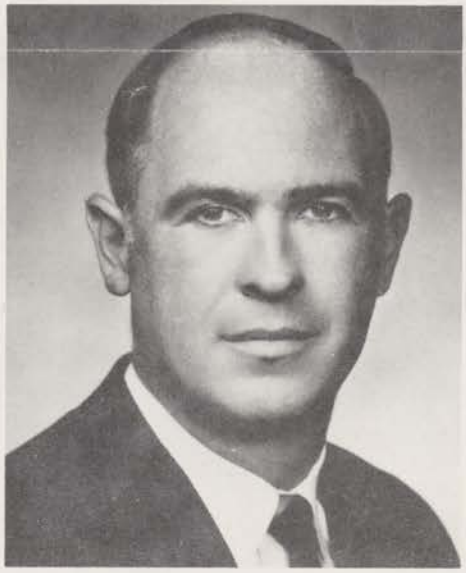
Attendance was down at the annual meeting so next year we plan to have the annual meeting as a Luncheon meeting. In December we had our annual Christmas Party at Rockland Country Club, with our host Ron Boydston. Woodie was the Chairman. Attendance was down again but those who did go had a great evening. It is hoped that we can get more participation for the Christmas Party in 74.

The New Year passed without too much fan fare. The Conference schedule soon started. A few of the area Supt.'s attended the Annual Pesticide Conference in December sponsored by the Extension Program in Hudson Valley—It is possible that sometime in 1974 Supt.'s may have to take a Examination in order to spray pesticides on their golf course. A lot depends upon how long it takes the Federal Govt. to set-up the standards. It may not happen until 1975. Rutgers had an excellent Conference this year. Actually you could have attended the whole weeks program as there were many excellent topics discussed. Walter Androsko Co. Ext. Agent was on the Program on Monday. Then it was on to Anaheim Calif. for the International Turf Grass Conference. It certainly was one of the best facilities we have ever had a conference held at. All exhibitors were on one floor and all meeting rooms were also in the same building. One could not help but notice how the whole area was kept spic and span by the convention staff. The elections were held on Wed. afternoon. Charles Baskin from Conn., GCSAA is our new President. We are looking for great progress under Charlie's dynamic leadership. Palmer Maples is the Vice President—New Board members were Charles Tadge from Ohio, and Mel Lucas from Long Island. It's the first time in many elections that I think a man did it all on his own merits not politics. Congratulations Mel. Please keep us informed. Ted Woehrle was re-elected to the board also.

The Keynote address on opening day "Every Man has his Mount Everest" was a story with colored slides that I hope someday you may have the opportunity of hearing. After seeing the challenges these men went through it makes our jobs seem very small with our summer stress periods. The many wonderful attractions that Anaheim offers, Disneyland, Knox Berry Farm, Japanese Village etc. made this a great convention for the whole family to enjoy. Many also made the Las Vagas stop, John Corsi is still thinking about the money he had and then lost. Many also made the tour of golf courses in the L.A. area. I visited one course that spent $30,000 just in tree maintenance. Out budgets look small compared to the 12 month operations.

President Harry Nichol will be on the program at Cornell University, Edward Horton will be on the program at University of Mass.

Now that we have been all revived and stimulated we can look forward to the 1974 turf season. It should bring some new challenges with the energy crisis showing its face in our operations for the first time.



Charles G. Baskin, elected President of GCSAA, member of CGCSA.

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Garry Crothers — *Co-Editor*
Ted Horton — *Co-Editor*

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Not copyrighted. If there is good here, we want to share it with all chapters – unless author states otherwise.

Congratulations

Tony Savone—Quaker Ridge **Old Oaks**

Coming Events:

April 6-7	County Home Gardeners Clinic — County Center — White Plains
April 18th	LIGCSA Harbor Hills Country Club Port Jefferson, N.Y.
May 16th	LIGCSA — Sayville Country Club

MEMBERSHIP

Class A:

Louis Polidor
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Somers, N.Y.

Membership Dues: All dues must be paid by April 4, 1974. The By-laws state that all dues must be received 60 days from billing.

MGCSA MANAGEMENT

In a recent statement, Len Agostino, our management consultant, outlined his goals for the upcoming year. "The most significant contribution I could make to the M.G.C.S.A. would be to increase membership participation in all the endeavors of the association. In line with this, I have asked each committee chairman to complete a form listing his planned accomplishment for the year as well as selecting members who could possibly assist in the work of his committee. We hope to be able to contact these selected members shortly in an attempt to solicit their assistance."

In the succeeding months, Len is planning on working closely with President Harry Nichol in investigating the possibility of insuring the limited liability of the association through the legal channels of incorporation. A final decision on this matter should be reached by June, 1974.

Other areas which should be touched upon by our consultant are a proposed salary and benefit survey, general assistance and recommendations to each committee and executive board member, updating of membership lists and roster preparation and distribution as well as any creative assistance which will contribute to the general improvement of the association.

Len will utilize the pages of TEE TO GREEN to keep us up to date on the progress of the committees during the year.

USGA GREEN SECTION MEETING

The United States Golf Association held its annual meeting on Golf Course Management at the Biltmore Hotel in New York City.

Mr. Clifford Wagner, President of the Golf Course Superintendents Association, was the first speaker. It's his opinion that present day superintendents are seeking a broader spectrum of knowledge, communication and understanding from their members, employees and research stations. He feels that more youths are entering the field with good educational backgrounds and he feels this is an asset of dignity credited to the associations.

The 70's being the topic of discussion saw in 1972 the introduction of a Certification. This test gives the superintendent the opportunity to receive more recognition while at the same time broadens his knowledge of turf management. The test covers all aspects of the job dealing with topics such as: GCSA its purpose and by-laws, the game of golf and its rules, turf management, Pesticides, management of budgets and records, management skill and recruiting personnel. There are presently 157 certified members and still more in the program.

The 70's produced other acts or laws such as O.S.H.A., the E.P.A., the present energy crisis, and a money crisis. All of these we are aware of and I see no need to dwell on them.

Mr. Wagner hopes the future will be bright with more seminars promised, a home study course is under consideration, also a consultant is available for advice at the home office of the G.C.S.A.

Dr. Duble representing the Texas A & M Turf Research Department made his first visit to New York City. He has been reevaluating the U.S.G.A. soil mixture for greens and has found better results using more sand in the mixture. By adding 10% more sand with dimensions in the range of ¼ to ½ mm. Dr. Duble found the filtration rate to be higher, the compaction not as great, and a greater water and nutrient holding capacity.

The greens at the Texas University were all rebuilt to these specifications taking care to follow exactly the above specifications. All mixing was done off the green site to ensure a proper mix. Dr. Duble was pleased with the rapid initial growth and has high hopes for the future.

The U.S.G.A. Panel discussed the year of 1973 and it was encouraging to know our area was not the only one besieged by Mother Nature. Mr. William Bengeyfield the Western Director commented on the increased play in that area, compaction was

greater, many clubs are not taking advantage of the labor saving devices and equipment. Mr. F. Lee Record from the Mid-Continent pointed out that play in that area began too early, the Bentgrass was not responding due to excess of water and little sunlight. Some superintendents aerified their turf in the spring and by summer they had oversucculent grasses besieged with all types of disease. Mr. James Mancrief the Southern Representative found it to be a poor year. Snow was seen in some areas, also excess rain, insects were plentiful — 3 species of mites were found where previously only one existed.

The systemics are being used all over the country but caution was stressed and rates not to exceed 6 oz./1000 were advised. Also the idea of using the contact in a combination program with the systemic was advised. Silver Crabgrass was the most dreaded weed, also Elephant Grass was found to be a problem.

The U.S.G.A. can be proud of its fine staff, they are true professionals. However, they cannot do it alone, best results are found when all work together. Remember they are there to be consulted and they often at times know exactly what are the problems and are able to be of assistance.

RUTGERS TURFGRASS CONFERENCE

The Rutgers Turfgrass Proceedings held this past January was a fine example of a turf conference. Rutgers has an excellent research department and they have worked continuously with Preemergence Crabgrass Control.

Their best results have occurred when the most efficient herbicide was choosen and the best application techniques were followed. Good consistent results are what is demanded of the herbicide. Unfortunately, this takes time and much patience on everyones part.

Of the herbicides tested, Benefin, DCPA, and Siduron showed fair to good control for the test period. However, the test period existed from 1967 through 1973 and these were not good years. It is important to remember that not only does the time of application affect the results but also the environmental characteristics of this same application time period.

Dr. Engel arrived at the following conclusions:

1) More consistent performance is needed from the herbicides that are tested.
2) Experimental anilines (A-820 & CG-10832) show good potential for crabgrass control.
3) Check application times. Performance can vary with 2 or 3 intermittence between applications.
4) Check performance of chemicals when applied as a spray versus dry. Some chemicals lose efficiency in water and thus will not produce to their potential.

Dr. Reed Funk discussed the "Performance of Kentucky Bluegrass" at Rutgers and has found the following results. Common Bluegrass has a rapid vertical growth but is susceptible to leaf spot. Merion, Vantage and Orion are resistant to Stripe Smut. For resistance to Dollar Spot, it is suggested to mix grass types, due to the various types of Dollar Spot. Vantage has promising resistance to Fusarium Blight, while Newport and Nugget are resistant to Powdery Mildew.

Mr. Charles Wilson who is Head Agronomist for the Sewerage Commission, Milwaukee Wisconsin hosted an excellent "Thatch Symposium." Dr. James Beard says, "thatch is a tightly intermingled layer of dead and living stems and roots that develops between the zone of gran vegetation and the soil surface." Dr. Dubel from Texas A & M says "thatch is anything between the soil surface and where you can cut the grass." Mr. Wilson says there is not good definition.

Thatch control is possible with earth worms which aerify and change the microclimate adjusting the air intake and water percolation. Proper nitrogen also is important but emphasis is stressed on not using too much Clippings, once thought to contribute to thatch, and now thought to provide more bacteria to aid in further breakdown of organic matter.

Thatch is composed of cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin which is the hardest to break down. Most of the new strains are full of lignin especially Nugget bluegrass.

Despite the disadvantage of thatch most people agree that there will always be some present and it does have its merits. A minimal layer of thatch will aid the golfer in stopping the ball, it will keep weed counts down, it cushions the crown area of the plant thus reducing compaction.

This phenomena called thatch can make or break a good golf course so be sure to treat it lightly with nitrogen and heavily with care.

Mr. Wilson was the speaker of the afternoon when he introduced his topic "Full Cycle with Sand." The Scots were the masters of golf years ago and it would seem fitting to adopt some of their techniques. Sand is one of these and St. Andrews greens are the best examples. Mr. Roy Lund, a soil physicist from California, persisted in the use of sand for topdressing with good results. Topdressing with sand, provided you use the specified size range, will give your greens the truest line possible. This sand will provide for increased drainage, something we all need more of. Thirdly, the compaction will be cut down, sand is much more porous than soil and water and nutrients are more readily available.

Realizing that what he is selling is against doctrine, Mr. Wilson has also provided the other side of the coin. Sand is very droughty, however, a solution is found by placing a false water table below the sand. It is also infertile and when a mistake is made it will be drastic. Fertilization will have to be managed even more closely than at present. Lastly, it is difficult to grow grass on sand, another remedy is the automatic irrigation system but not everyone has one.

I am sure everyone is not convinced about topdressing with sand but we should not exclude the possibility that it may work. We should try it, say on a practice green or a reserve putting area, and watch it and keep records on it. Possibly it could work, and a truer green would mean a happier membership.

A GOLF COURSE FAIRY TALE

Once upon a time there was a superintendent who had the perfect golf course. His course was so perfect that all the grass was watered fence to fence and every blade of grass was well fertilized and cut to just the right height. There were no clumps of tall grass or other unkept places where a golfer could lose a ball. Even the edges of the traps were sharp and clean.

All the members of the club were very happy because they could play sloppy golf and still score well because the rough

was short and the greens were lush and very soft. But there was an uneasiness in the land and many of the golfers became bored.

One dark day a strange phenomenon came over the land. Energy had to be conserved. Fertilizer was high in cost and very hard to get. What was the superintendent to do? Despite all his valiant efforts to keep up the course in the usual way it became evident that some of the grooming would have to suffer.

In time things were so bad that the superintendent had to mow less, fertilize less, and pump less water for irrigation. As a result the roughs were kept at a higher cut. The greens were pale from lack of the high nitrogen program and firm from the lack of overwatering. The sand trap edges were hand cycled in the old fashion way to save on gasoline. The golfers soon found they were playing a different type of golf course. They had to hit their drives straighter because poor shots were penalized by landing in long rough or were lost. They could no longer putt out of the traps. Much to their surprise, however, the greens putted better than ever. There was no puffiness from over fertilizing and the blades of grass were finer and stiffer. Holding a shot on the green was harder to do, so many golfers had to use more finesse around the greens.

Much to the surprise of the superintendent all that talk about trying to make the course longer stopped. The golfers came to find out that a course does not have to be long to be good. Some of the well traveled golfers commented the course resembled some of the fine features they had seen in Scottish golf courses.

Even after the energy crisis passed the golfers decided their course was better than before and lived to play it happily ever after.

(Rocky Mtn. Report) Stan Metsker

TURF MANAGEMENT

Winter Golf in Maryland

The annual onslaught of winter golfers is taking its toll upon Maryland golf courses. Those superintendents fortunate enough to have alternate greens or very sandy greens are avoiding some of the damage. The majority of courses, however, continue to allow a minority of the membership to trample the greens during the critical spring period. Compaction damage brought about by winter golfers from early March to late April is more serious than compaction damage in November through February. The higher water content of soil in the spring and the decreasing likelihood of freeze-thaw heaving usually make spring compaction more deadly than late fall or early winter compaction.

We all enjoy playing golf whenever the weather breaks and time permits, but I think we might benefit from a consideration of the effects of the compaction we are creating. If nothing else, we can perhaps come to a better appreciation of the profound effect a few rounds of winter golf might have upon the ability of the superintendent to produce good greens during the following summer.

Compaction of any turfgrass soil leads to increases in bulk density, heat conductivity, mechanical impedance and moisture retention. At the same time decreases in aeration porosity, infiltration, percolation and oxygen diffusion further complex the problem.

Bulk density is the mass of soil per unit of soil volume, including solids and the pore space. It is expressed in grams per cubic centimeter (g/cc) and ranges from around 0.8 on well aggregated soils to above 2.1 on highly compacted soils. Bulk density values greater than 1.5 are generally indicative of soils compacted to the point where turfgrass root growth is seriously impaired. If increases in bulk density occur during periods when roots are actively elongating the damage leads to poor developement of root systems essential for summer survival.

Increases in the heat conductivity of soils brought about by compaction leads to greater soil temperature extremes. The soil particles are packed closer together and the soil becomes a better conductor of heat. This means higher soil temperatures will be reached in the summer and lower soil temperatures in the winter. This means less rooting of the bentgrasses and bluegrasses at the higher temperatures. The increase in low temperatures, if severe enough, could result in slower root extension in the spring, lower root membrane permeability due to increased protoplasmic viscostiy and reduced rates of water movement to roots because of increased water viscosity.

Mechanical impedance or resistance to root or rhizome growth brought about by compaction is most severe on drier soils. The damage brought about by increases in mechanical impedance of soils is likely to be more severe on the clay and silt soils than on sandy soils because of the greater soil strength of heavier soils. This results in shorter root and rhizome systems.

Compacted soils, once wetted are difficult to dry because of their increased moisture retention and poor percolation tendencies. They have more small pores and can contain more water per unit volume of soil. Most of this water, however, is retained with greater force by the soil particle and is increasingly unavailable to the plant.

As compaction increases the total pore space in the soil decreases both in number and size of the pores. Small pores are usually filled with water and retain this water with greater force than larger pores. Increased compaction increases the ratio of small to large pores and, therefore, on a volume basis water begins to replace air in the soil profile. This leads to low oxygen availability to roots. The roots need this oxygen to maintain their normal metabolic functions and to actively take up nutrients from the soil solution. Pathogenic fungus organisms such as Pythium thrive in high soil temperatures in the presence of a lack of oxygen. The probability of summer disease problems has been increased.

Compaction is primarily a surface phenomenon that occurs in the top 2 or 3 inches of the soil. Infiltration, the passage of water through the soil surface, is, therefore, severely decreased by compaction. In the presence of poor surface drainage this generally leads to pooling of water in low areas on the greens and either suffocation to the turf or increased hydration of crown tissue leading to winter injury. Decreased infiltration rates that persist into summer make it extremely difficult to get water to the rootfeeding zone during times of drought stress.

Percolation is the movement of water through the soil

profile. Water movement through the soil decreased as a result of the decreased infiltration rate and the decrease in pore size. As pore size and number decrease the resistance to water flow increases. It becomes difficult if not impossible to get nutrients to the roots. The efficiency of fertilization is reduced considerably with more and more of the applied nutrients never penetrating the soil surface.

The decreases pore space brought on by compaction lowers the oxygen diffusion rate in the soil. Oxygen that was diffusing to the root through relatively large aeration pores before compaction must now diffuse in water at a rate 10,000 times slower. Weeds that can persist in low oxygen diffusion rates such as goosegrass now gain the competitive edge over Kentucky bluegrass.

The negative effects mentioned are simply the physical effects of compaction. All of these forces cause massive metabolic, morphologic, anatomic and ecologic effects on the turfgrass ecosystem being managed. Many of the turfgrass problems we see unfold on greens in June, July and August can be traced back to winter injury resulting from compaction created by golfers playing on greens that have not been designed for winter play. The 70-90% sand greens meeting the United States Golf Association (U.S.G.A.) specifications can withstand the compaction of winter play but unfortunately few golf greens in Maryland meet U.S.G.A. specifications. Winter golfers should be made aware of the consequences of playing golf all winter on poorly constructed greens. There are three alternatives to these consequences: 1) play winter golf on alternate greens 2) build U.S.G.A. greens or 3) play your winter golf in Florida.

John R. Hall, Turf Specialist

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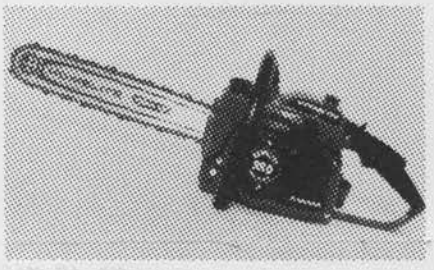

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