



CHIPS & PUTTS

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
POCONO TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

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1936

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SOIL TESTS & AMENDMENT APPLICATIONS ENSURE CORRECT pH & NUTRIENT LEVELS

Soil fertility is best defined as "the soil's ability to supply nutrients for plant growth." Within the soil is a virtual storehouse of plant nutrients readily available in many forms and degrees of availability.

Nutrients are the essential elements necessary for plant growth. They exist in the soil as micronutrients or macronutrients. Macronutrients are those nutrients that are found in the dry matter of plants in concentrations of at least 1,000 parts per million (ppm). Micronutrients are found at levels of 100 ppm or less.

A Soil Test is the best way to determine the levels of these nutrients in a turf stand.

The soil test gives you the information you need to make the necessary amendments to your turf area. With no timely assessment of soil nutrient levels, a fertilizer program is a shot in the dark which may lead to an imbalance of soil nutrient levels.

Experts recommend you test the soil for pH, Phosphorous & Potassium levels in the following situations:

- ⇒ Prior to seed establishment.
- ⇒ Regularly, every 3-5 years in established turf.
- ⇒ Each year, if the turf manager is trying to correct a deficiency or alter soil pH.
- ⇒ After regular use of fertilizers that contain phosphate or potash.

Soil Testing provides turf managers with the following advantages:

- ⇒ Utilization of existing turf nutrients.
- ⇒ Possible reduction of fertilizer applications.
- ⇒ Reduce chances of "surge" growth.

Turfgrass scientists tell us that soils are constantly

changing, due to clipping removal, fertilizer use, or the use of soil amendments.

By conducting a soil test you also reduce the changes of product waste. If the turf's minimal nutritional needs and pH levels are not corrected, you reduce the likelihood of wasted effort and wasted material.

Healthy plants, like healthy people, are better equipped to cope with detrimental forces generated by disease, turf injury, extremes in temperature and/or moisture.

Continued on Page 4

Balanced nutrition is a vital part of
"Turf Stress Protection."

Some Words of Wisdom

*It is not the employer who pays the wages
- he only handles the money.
It is the product that pays the wages.*

*Beware of little expenses.
A small leak will sink a great ship.*

In this issue.....

- Raffle Winners
- Grain on the Brain
- Clambake Golf Winners



President's Message.....

Green grass? Good for you and be thankful. I hope your members are well aware of the drought restrictions that are being enforced. I would like to thank the Allied Association for going to Harrisburg on behalf of all the turf associations to clarify the irrigation restrictions. Copies of their letter and the information is available through your local turf associations.

I would like to thank Gene Huelster, Host Superintendent and Don Weaver, General Manager, and the staff of Pocono Farms for accommodating the large crowd for the annual clam bake. The response was great! Thanks.

October is on the way. This means election time. Anybody wanting to run for the Board or any other position, please call Gene Huelster to be placed on the nominating list. This meeting in October will be held at the Bethlehem Golf Club. Please make all efforts to attend.

Short message this month. I've been spending a lot of time praying for rain. See everyone at Eagle Rock on September 21. Doug Witcraft is our host superintendent.

Jack Bird

From the Editor's Desk.....

In the last couple issues we have tried to show some of the new products that are available to our profession or some that are coming on line. These articles were meant to describe the different chemistry involved and their modes of action. By no stretch of the imagination were they meant to be a commercial for, or against, any product or manufacture. If this was construed in this sense, I apologize. Bad, bad me!

Now to the drought. After seeing a plethora of golf courses and athletic fields under severe moisture stress, and then after the periods of rain we recently experienced, it is amazing to observe the resiliency of the turfgrass plant. Grassed areas that looked like parched deserts a few weeks ago are now standing tall. For those of you who "played by the rules," you are a stellar example to your profession.

Of course the drought restrictions came from the bureaucrats in our state capital who are also involved in policing other matters that pertain to our health and well-being, whether we like it or not. Recently, they were called to Eagle Rock to respond to a complaint about the volume of goose droppings on the beach at the lake. After accessing the situation, they directed the staff to be sure the beaches were cleared of all such debris prior to the public's use. Where will it end?

Jim MacLaren



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1999 MEETING SITES

September 21, 1999	Eagle Rock Resort Doug Witcraft
October 19, 1999	Bethlehem Golf Club Tom Wilchak

Winners of the Four-Man Scramble at Pocono Farms C.C. Clam Bake

1st FLIGHT

1st Place	Gary Phillips, Sr. Gary Phillips, Jr. Mark Albino Scott Schilds	2nd Place	Ron Garrison, CGCS Kelly Kressler Tony Grieco, CGCS John Chassard
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2nd FLIGHT

1st Place	Tom Wilchak Lee Kozsey Ryan Rockovits Rodger Zellner	2nd Place	Pete Beblavy Dick Swell Tom Swanson Jim Honehouse
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3rd FLIGHT

1st Place	Ed Zimmerman William McCausland Mike Condor George Skawski	2nd Place	Dan Tanto Eric Reed Charlie Miller D.J. Chapman
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Closest to the Pin #3	Charlie LaBar
Closest to the Pin #8	Gary Phillips, Sr.
Longest Drive	Mark Albino, 336 yards

Biography of Shaun Henry, Wyoming Valley C.C.

Shaun grew up in Mechanicsburg, PA, where he began his career at the Silver Springs G.C. He then attended Delaware Valley College from 1994 to 1997 where he graduated on the Dean's List with a grade point average of 3.83. During his college days he worked at Wilmington C.C. and Congressional C.C. Then he moved on to Huntingdon Valley C.C. and back to Congressional C.C. He accepted the position of superintendent at Wyoming Valley C.C. in late 1998.

Shaun enjoys hunting, skiing, snowmobiling, and other outdoor activities. His longtime girlfriend is a student at The University of PA where she is pursuing a degree in Veterinary Medicine.

THANK YOU!

We would like to say THANK YOU to Gene Huelster, Superintendent; Adam Herman, Assistant; and Don Weaver, General Manager at Pocono Farms C.C. for a job well done. We had quite an enjoyable day for our clam bake. The course was superb, and the feast was excellent!



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Continued from Page 1

NITROGEN

Nitrogen (N) is used in the greatest quantity by turfgrass. Nitrogen levels affect turf color, rooting, and disease resistance. Since the late 1970's it has been the practice of turf professionals to use less N in spring and apply heavier N applications in the fall. Too much spring nitrogen will cause summer stress due to over-consumption of carbohydrates, according to research done by Dr. James Beard in 1973. The rule of thumb now is to go easy on the nitrogen in spring and make heavier applications in the fall.

"Heavy" nitrogen applications would be anything greater than 3/4# N/M, which will cause excessive shoot growth and decrease disease tolerance in the summer. However, most specialists agree that applying a limited amount of N (less than 3/4#) in early spring will produce quick green-up while not producing significant negative effects over the long term.

The indicator of low nitrogen in turf is an overall chlorotic appearance, appearing as a uniform yellowing of the turf stand.

PHOSPHORUS

Phosphorus's (P) key role is in the storage and transfer of energy within the plant and root growth. Turf that is deficient in phosphorus will appear a "sickly green" or even have a purple tint. Turf that is well fed with phosphorus will show improved disease resistance, heat, cold, and drought tolerance.

New turf, with limited root systems, require higher levels of phosphorus for healthy seedling development.

Incorporate phosphorus into the upper 1 to 2 inches of soil, based on soil test recommendations before planting. Do not apply phosphorus at regular intervals to established turf stands unless a soil test indicates there is a deficiency. Too much phosphorus will interfere with iron (Fe) and zinc (Zn) uptake by the roots.

POTASSIUM

Potassium (K) is involved in the formation of carbohydrates and proteins, and also has a role in photosynthesis. A plant that is deficient in potassium will be less disease resistant than turf with sufficient K levels. Potassium leaches easily from sandy soils, so turf that is grown in these soils should be "spoon fed" with small amounts of potassium on a frequent basis.

MAGNESIUM

Most soils contain ample amounts of magnesium (Mg). Magnesium is the center ion of the chlorophyll molecule, it enhances photosynthesis, enzyme activity and sugar production, all essential for optimum plant development.

Continued on Page 5

Reminder!

Don't miss a Meeting Notice or an issue of *Chips & Putts!*

If you have recently moved or plan on moving, please let Melinda know so that your mail is sent to the correct address. Please give her a call at 570-388-2889 or fax 570-388-2167.



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GRAIN ON THE BRAIN

Richard Hurley, Ph.D - - *Lofts Seed, Inc.*
Reprinted from NJTA Clippings - 1998

Anyone who watches golf on T.V. has heard commentators say, "This putt is going down grain." I'm not sure television audiences understand what this means. "Grain" as used by T.V. analysts, is grossly overused and misunderstood by the golf public.

I've spent my professional life studying turfgrasses and have collected, observed, bred, and researched various aspects of grasses used on putting greens. I've also attended more than 100 professional golf events, caddied on the Tour in the late 1960's and worked on maintenance staffs in preparation for major championships.

Frankly, what you hear on T.V. about "up grain," "down grain," "grain going east to west," and other statements are oversimplified and in most cases misleading. What the T.V. audience needs to hear more of from commentators is "uphill," "downhill", and "sidehill," rather than grain, grain, grain!

Some putting greens - - especially on older courses - - may exhibit distinct patches of grasses, most ranging in size from three to five feet in diameter and displaying different colors and textures. These segregated patches of grass may produce an orientation of leaves and stems in a certain horizontal direction that we can call "grain."

This grain may influence the direction of a putt, especially as the ball slows near the cup. But the grain most typically grows in random directions when not unduly influenced by steep slope, water drainage patterns, a strong wind blowing constantly in one direction or continued mowing in the same direction. On relatively flat putting surfaces on older courses - without these influences - grasses typically grow in random directions.

T.V. commentators use "grain" for all descriptions of how

the ball may be influenced. They don't mention that an older green is typically made up of many patches of grass, possibly hundreds on one green, that may show some of this grain growing in small patches and in random directions.

The analysts also don't mention that superintendents routinely use brushes and other devices to stand leaf blades and stems upright so this random grain can be minimized or eliminated.

These myths about grain are contrary to what turf professionals know. I've discussed grain with superintendents and other turfgrass experts. They agree that grain typically grows on greens in random directions.

Most of the courses being built today in cool-season climates are select-greens. These state-of-the-art bentgrasses were developed to grow upright and not produce grain.

When the pro tour hits Florida in February and March, dormant bermudagrass greens are typically winter overseeded with *poa Trivialis*. This provides the putting surface at many courses, including Arnold Palmer's Bay Hill. Although I have not observed grain on the greens at Bay Hill, I turned on the television while attending a tournament there last year and the first thing I heard was "up grain," "down grain" and so on.

I've talked to a well-known T.V. commentator about this, and he was very confident of this opinion that bermudagrass "grows east to west."

I plan to attend the Bay Hill Classic this month (spring 1998), and if a broadcaster wants to discuss grain, I'm game.

Some advice for commentators: Find more appropriate words, like "downhill" or "uphill." You will be much easier to listen to.

Editor's Note: Maybe replace T.V. commentators/analysts with Johnny Miller.

"Grain" is
grossly overused
and
misunderstood.

Continued from Page 4

CALCIUM

Calcium (Ca) is important in root cell wall formation, cell division and growth. Calcium deficient turf will turn a reddish brown color. Calcium is found in liming products and gypsum.

IRON

A micronutrient, Iron (Fe) helps in the production of chlorophyll. Iron is most often deficient in turfgrasses, especially in alkaline (high pH) soils. Iron chlorosis appears as random patches throughout the turf as pale green to yellow

and even white leaves.

MANGANESE

Manganese (Mn) is a micronutrient that is used to form chlorophyll. It also plays a role in photosynthesis. Deficient symptoms are evident mainly as interveinal chlorosis which may be confused with iron or zinc deficiencies. Also, manganese may release iron.

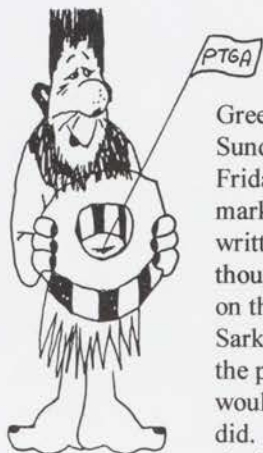
BORON

Boron (B) enhances sugar translocation and growth of new plant tissue.



Diary of a Greenskeeper

SATURDAY



Everyone in the world loves weekends, except Greenskeepers. More turf disasters occur on Saturdays and Sundays than any Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday & Fridays combined. Right off the bat four pins and a dozen markers are missing and the usual moronic messages are written in the sand traps. Why can't they write inspirational thoughts, maybe the weather report? A neat group partied on the course last night. All imported beer, an empty Cutty Sark, and two Southern Comfort – members' kids! One of the part time help (college kid) came in to tell me his rotary wouldn't shut off. Told him to lower it over a stump. He did. Mechanic went for parts. Nap on hammock. Green chairman calls. Discussion with wife on getting an unlisted phone number. Pro called, left message to call him back.

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A message from your golf course superintendent and GCSAA



MEETING DATES TO REMEMBER

Joseph M. Duich Endowment Tournament
Tuesday, October 5, 1999, Saucon Valley C.C.

Eastern PA Turf Conference & Trade Show
January 11-13, 2000, Valley Forge, PA

25th Annual Western PA Turfgrass Tournament
Monday October 11, 1999, Fox Chapel G. C.

Northeastern PA Turfgrass & Grounds Maintenance School
January 27, 2000, The Woodlands, Wilkes-Barre, PA

23rd Annual Joseph Valentine Memorial Golf Tournament
Monday, October 18, 1999 Gulph Mills G. C.

Western PA Turfgrass Conference & Trade Show
February 9-11, 2000, Monroeville, PA

Penn State Golf Turf Conference
November 9-11, 1999, University Park, PA

SEPTEMBER MEETING SITE

Eagle Rock Resort September 21, 1999

Eagle Rock was started as Valley of the Lakes in the 1970's. It was a residential community with plans to have a golf course designed by Arnold Palmer. After many years of unrest and financial disarray, it was purchased in 1996 by Double Diamond Corporation out of Dallas Texas.

Construction of the golf course was begun in 1997 using the Arnold Palmer design. The first seeding was done in late August and the "front nine" was opened for play on July 31, 1998.

Following that, the back nine construction was started. It was designed by the group of Gracy, Lowery & Witcraft. The course is Pennlinks greens, tees, and fairways, with the rough being all bluegrass.

The back nine should be open in the spring of 2000.

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Casual attire. Collared shirts and spikeless shoes.
Carts must stay on the cart paths.

VENUE FOR THE DAY

GOLF: Shotgun start at 10:00 A.M.

LUNCH: At halfway house, starting at 11:00 A.M.
Hot Dogs, Pretzels, Birch Beer, Beer

COCKTAILS 3:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.
&
HORS d'OEUVRES

SPEAKER: Doug Linde, Delaware Valley College

DINNER: 4:00 P.M.
Prime Rib, Ham, Turkey, Chicken
Marsala, Stuffed Shells, Cajun Catfish,
Red Bliss, Parsley Potatoes, California
Vegetables, Salad, Dessert.



Dean Snyder
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POCONO ROUNDUP

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE POCONO
TURFGRASS ASSOCIATION

WELCOME!



We would like to welcome the following new member to our Association:

Gregory A. McElhattan, Class A, Wilkes-Barre Municipal G.C.

One way to keep people from jumping down your throat is to keep your mouth shut.

Failure is only the opportunity to begin again more intelligently.

IN MEMORIAM



Our condolences go out to the family of George Smith who passed away at the age of 88. He was a retired member of the PTGA and was a superintendent at Allentown Municipal Golf Club from the 1950's to the early 1970's.

Condolences also go out to Mike Kubasak, Jr. and his family on the death of his father, Mike Kubasak, Sr. Mike Jr. is the superintendent at Edgewood in the Pines, where his father also worked since 1988.

Drought Information via the Internet:
www.dep.state.pa.us



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