

# CONNECTICUT



# CLIPPINGS

May, 1987

Volume 21, Number 2

## Up Coming Events

- CAGCS Meeting-- June 8**  
Hopmeadow Country Club
- Univ. of Mass. Field Day-June 25**  
South Deerfield, Mass.
- CAGCS Meeting-- July 14**  
Cliffside Country Club
- CAGCS Family Day -- August ?**  
Madison Club
- CAGCS Meeting -- Sept. 15**  
Skungamaug, Coventry, CT.
- Scholarship & Research Tourney**  
Glastonbury Hills -- Oct. 7
- CAGCS Meeting -- October 13**  
Tashua Knolls, Trumbull, CT.
- John Deere Scramble -- Aug. 20**  
Whitney Farms

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Question for this Issue's  
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The Case of  
Seasonal Labor

## WHO DID THE RAIN DANCE ?



A view of the 2nd hole at  
Cliffside Country Club  
April, 1987

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Superintendents**

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The object of this association is to encourage increased knowledge of golf course management and greater professionalism through education, research, exchange of practical experience and the well being of each individual member.

**Healthy Turf, Reduces Pollutents in Water  
Runoff**

Studies at Penn State University by Dr. Thomas Watschke, have shown that a thick healthy turf will reduce runoff "to next to nothing."

"Thick well maintained turf will slow the velocity of runoff and allow the water to infiltrate" he said. "We have found differences of the magnitude of 15 times between runoff from a highly maintained turf area and that from a patchy area full of weeds."

What that may mean to homeowners, is that pesticides running off into water supplies may be overblown.

The Penn State study involves 12 sloped plots of seeded and sodded areas. The 1300 square foot plots range in quality from thinly vegetated to thickly vegetated.

When it rains, water runs into a catch basin, where automatic equipment measures the rate and amount of runoff every 60 seconds. Water samples are collected so the nutrient and pesticide content can be analyzed.

Watschke said the research so far has concentrated on the rate of runoff.

"The next step will be to add commercially available registered pesticides and nutrients to study their effects," he said. "This will finally put the horse before the cart. It will tell us what we don't know about what has already happened and is happening."

Watsche said he believes the research will show that when a shomeowner has a thick, dense lawn, almost all of the pesticides he or a lawn-chemical company applies stays on the site.

He said infiltration into the ground is much more desirable environmentally than having the pesticides run off because microbes in the soil break down the chemicals into harmless materials.

In the runoff tests, Watschke found that the highest-quality plot - a sodded plot without soil patches showing through - registered a runoff rate of about a half gallon a minute during peak rainfall.

By comparison, 7.5 gallons of water a minute ran off a neighboring plot that was thinly seeded and had bare areas separating clumps.

The tests showed that sodded plots did a much better job of reducing runoff than seeded plots four months after the lawns were established.

Watschke said the study also is the first to document the actual amount of runoff coming off lawns.

Civil engineers must rely on figures from pasture runoff studies when designing water-collection systems for residential developments.

Watschke said pasture runoff figures are much greater than lawn runoff figures because pastures are more compacted and not as thickly vegetated as lawns.

He said as a result, the water-collection systems in developments probably are designed to handle more water than is likely to occur - at least that water coming from vegetated areas.

"It doesn't particularly bother me, though, that water-collection systems are probably oversized," he said. "That serves as a fail safe."

The study is being conducted at Penn State's Landscape Management and Water Quality Reseaarch Center and is being funded by the university, the Pennsylvania Turfgrass Council and the professional lawn-care industry.

## Superintendents' Forum

The Supt. Forum is published each issue of the Conn. Clippings, and is of a question and answer type format. At this time, the questions are being written by the editor, with the responses coming from the readers, which will be published in the next issue of Conn. Clippings. This month's Forum question, deals with hiring of seasonal labor.

Seeing that the golf season entails about 8 months of the year, seasonal labor seems to have been a necessary evil. Dealing with hiring and training new people from year to year, has become more and more difficult in recent years. As Golf Course Managers, I feel that this is a dilemma we must deal with or at least be thinking of dealing with.

My question to you is, what methods have you employed at your particular facility to combat this dilemma, what were the results of these methods, and what other methods do you wish you could employ to deal with this problem.

To air your comments to these statements, please do so by June 15 to;

John F. Streeter, CGCS  
Editor, *Connecticut Clippings*  
160 Nod Road  
Avon, Ct. 06001  
or call, 658-5796

The *Connecticut Clippings* is an official publication of The Connecticut Association of Golf Course Superintendents, Inc.

## Readers Respond to Superintendents' Forum on Winter Golf

by Dennis Petruzzelli

I've always believed that a Superintendent is as strong or respected, based primarily by his extent of communication and educating the golfing membership. I've had to deal with recent controversial topics such as "Killer Chemicals and Exposure to Them", also the "Winter Greens Syndrome". I've attacked both topics, not only to protect myself at my club, but nationally to help protect our image as Golf Course Superintendents'. [rebuttals of articles have been sent to *Golf Digest* and *Golf Magazine*.]

At Redding, we have a monthly newsletter for club news and information. I've routinely written articles on various topics concerning the golf course and the environment. It is a very effective and valuable vehicle. It can be used to educate, inform, set precedents and policies, provide foresight, and to gain leverage on projects I feel that might not be favorable to the membership.

Posting editorials and my rebuttals side by side, have also been effective means of protection or supporting A Point of View, [mine of course].

One such controversial topic recently arose in *Golf Digest* regarding "Winter Greens". The article was extremely one sided, and has snowballed into a situation which I really have to fight for support. In my one year at this club, I've gained support and respect from the membership on just about anything I wanted to do, except temporary greens.

Back in late November, play had died down to nill, we had an extremely wet period and I decided to go to temporary greens. Not only did I disrupt the few die hards we have, but the golf pro and greens committee as well. I did inform the membership of the necessities and benefits of temporary greens before hand, so this was no suprise. My job is to give them the very best golf course attainable. I was just protecting myself and my greens. There is still mixed feelings about my temporary greens, but I believe it will be a sore subject here for years to come.

This article also by Dennis Petruzzelli, is a rebuttaale to *Golf Digests* article on "Winter Greens", which also appeared in his club's Newsletter

"Temporary Greens?" "I don't like playing on those pseudo-greens!" "It's just not golf!" Those are just a few of the comments I have heard through the 'grapevine'. Why play temporary greens? Hopefully, in a very simple, concise explanation, I can make our winter golfers aware of the 'monster' we could create (or should I say have created).

As colder temperatures move in, turfgrasses begin to slow their vegetative growth (leave blades). Plant roots grow constantly, regardless of air temperatures. The leaf blade's main function is to make food. This process, photosynthesis, basically uses carbon dioxide and water with the aid of sunlight and produces carbohydrates (food for the plant). The food produced is stored in the root system and is gradually used up. During winter periods, limited food making occurs, if any, and the stored reserves aid in root growth.

When 'traffic' occurs on frosted turf, mortality is the end result. Frosts actually freeze the plant cells and disruption of the frozen cells kills the plant in question. In 'pre-snow' periods, it is a good practice to avoid any 'traffic' on greens for the above reason. As the ground freezes, regular greens can be played on without any major detrimental effects. Playing on greens, regardless of weather conditions (like in the past), 'sets us back' that much further from having high quality, championship-type greens. In the long run, playing temporary greens will give us healthier, better playing, higher quality putting turf. From a playability standpoint, use of greens in the winter provides horrible putting, and it doesn't make that much difference which surface you play on. When the greens are in a freezing and thawing period, traffic must be avoided to prevent putting surface imperfections and plant damage.

In this concise article, I hope I've made this situation a bit more understandable. If anyone has any questions, I would appreciate it if you would contact me directly. I am open to any suggestions/ideas you may have.

## Responses to Superintendent Forum Continued

by Michael Wallace, CGCS

As superintendent at Rockledge Country Club years ago, we had a mild Fall and early Winter one year. I recommended the closing of the course as usual, December 1st, and with that decision, politics entered.

The course was opened in sort of a "closed" mode. What that meant was we would allow play but since the contract for the professional and the starters had ended, no fees would be collected. Seeing that golfers are bargain hunters at heart, you can imagine the results.

Play proceeded up until January 6th of that year. The ground was frozen, and cups could not be moved. The next Spring one could see very dramatically the damaged areas on the greens, which were very thin and weak. Was there a lot of play? No, not really. Maybe 20 to 30 people a day. After that experience, December 1st became the date to close the course. Politics was not an agronomic factor to be considered, but it was and at the time, I had to live with the consequences.

Is there an answer? I feel that there is, that is public relations. Let us remember, it is the golfer we serve. It is their course, so one must approach the issue from that prospective. I point out the cost benefit ratio in this problem.

Cost: Greens will in all probability be damaged and set back in the Spring.

Benefit: Ten to 20 members may benefit from a little exercise.

Who do we owe our allegiance to? The 20 members? Or, the vast majority who want good Spring conditions and who don't really want the higher expenses to allow the other 20 to play Winter golf? I think the majority rules.

Point out the consequences, and then implant a decision. If you have good PR, you should not have a problem. In New England, this will always be a problem. The coast will be open earlier, and stay open later. This is a geographic area we can do nothing about.

We can, however, educate our committees and members to our particular conditions and problems.

by Steve Rackliffe

I was very disappointed to read Robert Carney's article regarding temporary greens. I suggest Mr. Carney concentrate on his field of expertise, and let golf course superintendents concentrate on theirs.

In the first place, I do not know of any Superintendents who feel that they do not want to "bother with any of their membership" spring, summer, fall or winter.

Secondly, Mr. Carney would probably be one of the first to complain in the spring about greens that aren't true and are bumpy. He also would be among the first to complain in the summer, when high temperatures and drought lead to a decrease in density of the turf on the putting surface, which was caused in part, by continuous winter play.

Thirdly, with regards to the golf course in which 9 of the 45 holes are opened for winter play, I ask, "Why aren't all 45 holes open, if Mr. Carney is SURE damage would not result?"

Lastly, not all golf courses have budgets which can afford extra top-dressings, like those in Westchester County. The easiest way out for superintendents would be to say, "Go ahead, play the greens". However, most superintendents choose the right way, and what's best for their golf course and TOTAL membership rather than taking the easy way out.

A copy of this article was also submitted to *Golf Digest*.

Thanks to all Forum contributors: Dennis Petruzelli, Mike Wallace CGCS, Steve Rackliffe, and Robert Chalifor CGCS.



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## Golf Rule of the Month

### Dropping and Re-dropping:

A ball to be dropped under the Rules shall be dropped by the player himself. He shall stand erect, hold the ball at shoulder height and arm's length and drop it. If a ball is dropped by any other person or in any other manner the player shall incur a penalty stroke.

If the ball touches the player, his partner, either of their caddies or their equipment before or after it strikes the ground, the ball shall be re-dropped, without penalty.

The ball should be dropped as near as possible to the spot where it lay, but not nearer the hole.

## GCSAA Public Relations on the Move

Donald E. Hearn, CGCS, President of The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, has announced the "GCSAA \$10,000 Challenge For Excellence" in conjunction with the Liberty Mutual Legends of Golf Classic in Austin, Texas.

"We're excited to offer a \$10,000 prize to the first member of the Senior Tour to ace the 17th hole during competition on Saturday or Sunday," said Hearn.

"Today's Golf Course Superintendent pursues excellence in developing playable conditions at their course just like professionals who play golf to win," added Hearn.

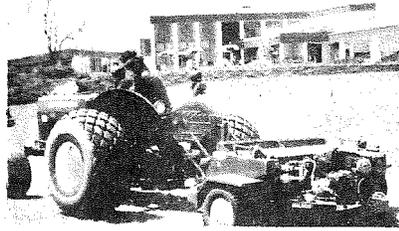
The Legends Classic is part of the PGA's Senior Tour program and the final two rounds will be nationally televised by NBC April 25 and 26.

"The 17th hole at Onion Creek is one of the most exciting and familiar TV holes in the history of Seniors golf," said Rush Evans, general chairman and executive director. "AT 150 to 160 yards this will be a great challenge and we're excited to be a part of this activity with GCSAA."

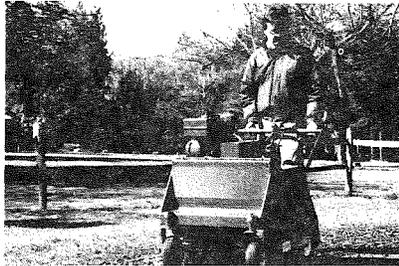
Five thousand dollars will be awarded directly to the first Tour member to score a hole-in-one on Saturday or Sunday. The Association also will donate \$2,500 to both the Austin Chapter of March of Dimes and the GCSAA Scholarship program in that player's name.

"It's a chance for everybody to win," concluded Hearn.

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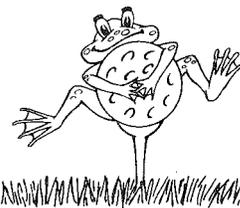
## Nine Ways to Kill an Association

Here are the Nine Commandments for making sure your association meets a certain death:

1. Don't participate beyond paying your dues---let "them" handle things. Then complain that members have no voice in what goes on.
2. Decline all offices and committee appointments---your too busy for them. Then offer vociferous advice on how "they" should do things.
3. If appointed to a committee, don't work---it's a courtesy appointment. Then complain because the organization has stagnated.
4. If you do attend management meetings, don't initiate new ideas. Then you can play "devil's advocate" to those ideas submitted by others.
5. Don't rush to pay your dues--they're to high anyway. Then complain about poor financial management.
6. Don't encourage others to become members--that's selling. Then complain that membership is not growing.
7. Don't read the mail from headquarters--its not important. Then complain that your not informed.
8. Don't volunteer your talents--that's ego fulfillment. Then complain that you're never asked , never appreciated.
9. And, if by any chance the organization grows in spite of your contributions, grasp every opportunity to tell the youngsters how tough it was, how hard you worked in the old days to bring the organization to its present level of sucess.

This article was received from Ron Holcomb by way of *The Buckeye Nurseryman*.

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## Golf Committee Announces Tournament Slate

Mike Chrzanowski, Golf Chairman for CAGCS, announced the following tournament schedule and formats for 1987.

- May 19, Throw Out Tournament; The Brownson Club
- June 8, First Round CAGCS Championship; Hopmeadow  
Parsons Memorial  
Met area team qualifying
- June 15, CAGCS Annual Invitational Tourney; Watertown
- July 14, Second Round CAGCS Championship; Cliffside  
Second Round Met area team qualifying
- Aug. 20, John Deere Scramble; Whitney Farms
- Sept. 15, Callaway Tournament; Skungamaug
- Oct. 7, Scholarship and Research Tourney; Glastonbury
- Oct. 13, Supt. and Assistant Tourney; Tashua Knolls

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## The Grass Catcher

Floods and rain have ravished Connecticut golf courses this spring. I'm sure many of you have some interesting tails to tell. What better place to do it than in the *Connecticut Clippings*.

A good time was had by all who attended the CAGCS monthly meeting at New Haven Golf Club in April. Superintendent Jim McDonald, was a most gracious host. The golf course was in fine condition and the weather was very cooperative. No one burned up the golf course, but I do know of a twosome or two that won 2 dollar nassaus. Better luck next month. After a fine day of golf, the New Haven Golf Club adorned us with a birrage of hors d'oeuvres second to none, followed by a scrumtious roast beef dinner. Hats off to Jim McDonald and the staff of New Haven Golf Club.

Jim Mederios and the SAV PLAN, great idea and needs support.

Here is how one Superintendent deals with informing the members of pesticide spraying at his golf course.

### **"Greens Will be Sprayed Today Please Don't Lick Your Balls"**

A sign posted at The Yale Golf Club.

Did you fill out and return the survey on The Black Layer problem that was in the Feburary-March issue of *Newsline*.  
{The GCSAA Newsletter}

## John Deere Company to Sponsor Go Event

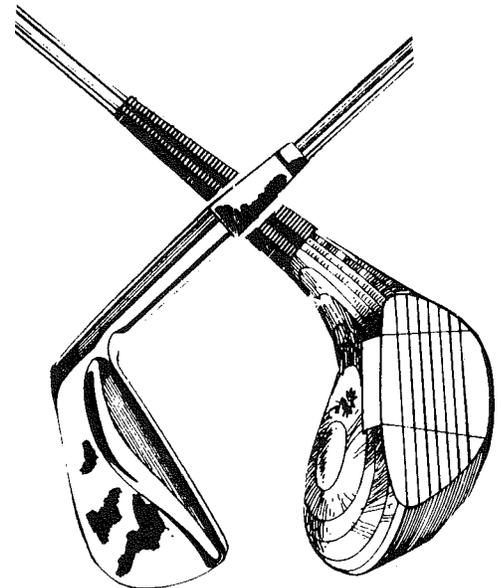
The John Deere Company, recently announced that they will sponsor a Superintendent-PGA Professional golf tournament.

The event will feature four-man teams competing in a scramble type format, at the 41 PGA Sections throughout the country. Teams will be made up of, The Golf Course Superintendent, the clubs PGA Proffesional, club President and the clubs Manager.

Qualifying is scheduled between June and September at local sites, with the sectional winners competing in a 36 hole tournament to be held in November. Not much has been said about the final tournament in November, but rumor has it being held some where in the sunbelt.

Gary Gottschalk, manager of John Deere's Golf and Turf Division, said the firm is excited about the concept. The program provides an excellent oppurtunity for the club superintendent and club profesional to associate with the club officals in a congenial atmosphere.

The Connecticut Section competition will be held on August 20 at Whitney Farms. Anyone requesting more information contact Peter Pierson Executive Director, CAGCS.



## TURF CLIPPINGS

### Snow Mold. devastates Connecticut golf courses

by, Willam Dest Associate Professor  
Dept. of Plant Science  
Univ. of Connecticut

Golf Course Superintendents from around the state have observed and reported one of the worst incidence of snow mold diseases in their years of experience in golf course management. This concurs with the observations that we have also had the opportunity to make both on golf courses and in-home lawns. As much as 80 percent of fairway turf on some golf courses has been affected. Both the gray (*Typhula* spp.) and pink (*Gerlachia* spp.) species were present, although the *Typhula* was more prevalent. Bentgrass, annual bluegrass and perennial ryegrass were infected.

A few golf courses that apply fungicides on fairways to control diseases throughout the growing season reported from 50 to 75 percent of the turf infected with snow mold. However, most golf courses on a fungicide program for disease control on fairways reported much less disease incident than golf courses with no fungicide program for fairways. The disease incidence did not appear to be related to the last date fungicide treatments were applied. Golf courses that applied the last fungicide treatment in September had no greater disease incidence than golf courses applying later treatments. This indicates some residual protection against snow mold diseases from programs designed to control diseases associated with spring/summer weather.

The first snow fell before the ground was deeply frozen and may have had some effect on the severe disease incidence. The snow remained on the ground throughout January and most of February, with the first sign that the grass infected showing up in the latter part of February as snow began to melt. Daytime temperatures were from 35 degrees through 40 degrees, optimum temperatures for snow mold to occur, particularly the *Typhula* species. Also, the snow melted slowly which provided moist conditions and high relative humidity.

Fortunately, the pink snow mold which seems to cause more permanent injury was not as widespread as the *Typhula*. This may be due to lower temperatures for optimum Pink Snow Mold infection to occur. However, we have noticed increased occurrence of Pink Snow Mold over the last several years with most of the infection to grasses occurring in late fall. This could be due to the development of resistant strains of the pathogen, lack of an early fall fungicide that will control Pink Snow Mold, increased use of irrigation or a combination of all three factors.

This year's injury from snow mold appears to be surficial and most of the turf infected should fully recover within several weeks.

A Good Year for SnowMold by, Peter Landschoot  
Dept. of Plant Science  
Univ. of R.I.

Winter is generally considered the 'off season' for turfgrass growth, and the time when turf managers can make preparations for the next growing season. However, as turf growth slows in late fall, a group of cold tolerant, pathogenic fungi become active. These fungi cause a group of turf diseases collectively known as snow molds. Although there are several different snow mold diseases affecting turfgrasses, the two most common to Southern New England are gray snow mold and pink snow mold.

Gray snow mold is caused by the fungus *Typhula incarnata*. *T. incarnata* survives the summer months as dark, reddish-brown resistant structures called sclerotia. In late fall, the cold and wet conditions favor germination of sclerotia and the fungus begins active growth.

Symptoms of gray snow mold first appear at snow melt in early spring. The resulting straw-colored patches are 2 inches to 3 feet in diameter. The leaves of affected grass are usually matted together and sometimes covered with a fluffy, gray-white mycelium. Under optimum conditions for disease development the turf may be killed, thus, resulting in poor recovery. In most cases, however, only the leaves are killed and patches fill in with new tillers from unaffected rhizomes and stolons.

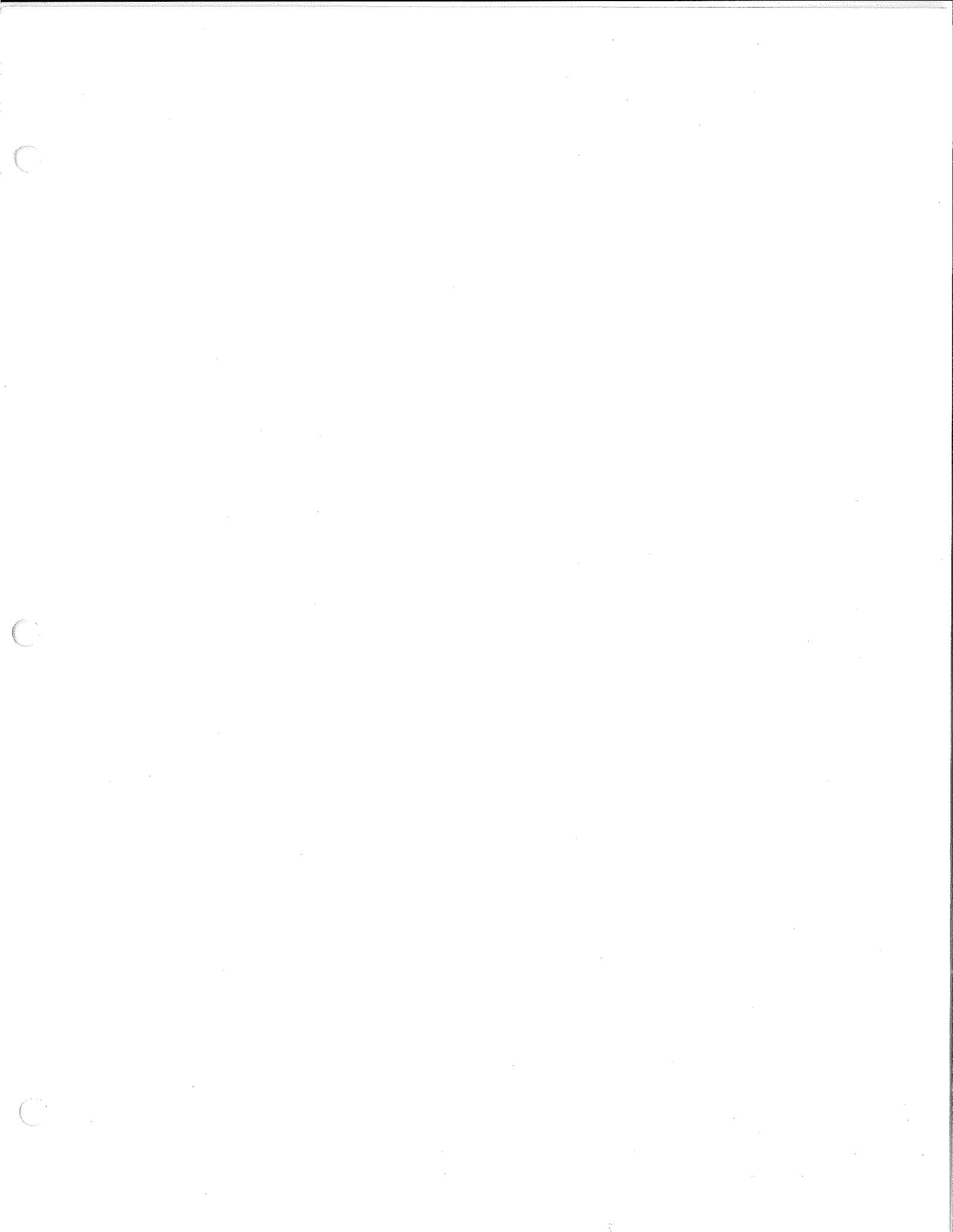
Pink snow mold is caused by the fungus *Microdochium nivale* (formerly called *Fusarium nivale*). *M. nivale* survives unfavorable conditions as microscopic, dormant spores in plant debris.

Symptoms of pink snow mold appear as circular patches of pink to orange colored dead turf 2 to 8 inches in diameter. The pink to orange color is produced by numerous fungal fruiting structures called sporodochia. Mycelium of *M. nivale* may be evident under extremely wet conditions. This disease tends to be more destructive than gray snow mold because it can affect the roots as well as the leaves.

Snow mold diseases are generally most severe under prolonged, deep snow cover over unfrozen turf. Ordinarily, the mild winters in Southern New England do not favor severe outbreaks of this disease. The winter of 1987, however, provided more snow accumulation than any winter over the past several years. These conditions resulted in an unusually high amount of snow mold in Southern New England.

The severity of snow mold diseases can be reduced by avoiding heavy applications of N-fertilizer in late fall before the turf becomes dormant. Other recommended practices include mowing the turf in late fall so that it will not lay over and mat together under snow; construction of snow barriers (fences) to prevent drifting on golf greens; and preventing the compaction of snow by snow mobiles or skies in sensitive areas.

Fungicides are effective as preventative treatments when applied in late fall before the development of a permanent snow cover. Turf managers have traditionally used mercury-based fungicides to control snow mold diseases. However, because of concerns about environmental pollution, several states have restricted the use of these fungicides. Alternative fungicides include thiram, cadmium, chloroneb, and some systemic compounds. Check labels for rates and the particular snow mold disease you want to control (some fungicides control gray snow mold but not pink snow mold and vice-versa). It should be noted that gray snow mold and pink snow mold often coexist in the same area, thus, fungicide combinations may be helpful in controlling both these diseases. Fungicides are generally not recommended for snow mold control in spring. In most cases, the turf will recover when temperatures rise and the turf begins active growth.



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Great Meadows, NJ 07838  
Bill Carriere (914) 937-5479  
Steve Kotowicz (203) 792-3032
- **Pro-Lawn Products, Inc.**  
30 Nashville Road  
Bethel, CT 06801  
Steve Kotowicz - Sales Representative  
(203) 792-3032
- **Purple Kings Farm**  
633 Northwest Hill Road  
Williamstown, MA 01267  
Ralph Mason  
(413) 458-4646, (413) 458-3184
- **The Reichert Company**  
P.O. Box 273, Riverside, CT 06878  
Automotive Lubricant Distributor  
Frank Reichert  
(203) 637-2958
- **Salsco, Inc.**  
105 School House Road Cheshire, CT 06410  
Salvatore J. Rizzo, Jon Mattsson  
(203) 271-1682
- **Shemin Nurseries, Inc.**  
1081 King Street  
P.O. Box 64, Glenville Station  
Greenwich, CT 0683  
(203) 531-7352
- **Somers Turf Supplies**  
P.O. Box 294 Devon, CT 06460  
Bill Somers  
(203) 878-2108
- **Terre Co.**  
206 Delawanna Avenue  
Clifton, NJ 07014  
Byron Johnson, Jr.  
(201) 473-3393
- **Turf Products Corporation**  
1496 John Fitch Blvd.  
South Windsor, CT 06074  
Mark Loper, John Ferry, Shawn Donovan  
(203) 528-9508
- **Valley Farms Nursery & Supply**  
Simsbury, CT 06070 Sod - Turf Supplies - Fertilizer  
Joseph D. Bidwell, Owner  
(203) 651-8555
- **Westchester Turf Supply, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 198 Lincolndale, NY 10540  
Bob Lippman  
(914) 277-3755  
(914) 248-5790HM
- **Winding Brook Turf Farm, Inc.**  
240 Griswold Road Wethersfield, CT 06109  
Donald Grant  
(203) 529-6869
- **Al Zikoros**  
Golf Course Architect  
Member ASGCA  
P.O. Box 187, Canaan, ME 04924  
(207) 474-8868
- **Val-Agra, Inc.**  
P.O. Box 8811, 672 Tolland St.  
East Hartford, CT 06108  
Henry Lesinski  
(203) 528-9249

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