

April 13, 2012 -- Volume 50, Number 08

Strip 'Em Bare

Don't just "tease" your collars

by Stuart Bothe, superintendent, Vanderbilt Country Club, Naples, Florida





Collar stripping with a sod cutter is aggressive, as it removes the entire turf and upper soil layer.

We do a lot of work on our putting greens to produce premium playing conditions in South Florida. Bermudagrass produces a lot of thatch, especially ultradwarf bermudagrasses like TifEagle and Champion. Excessive thatch creates poor playing conditions and encourages turf diseases. It is important to apply proper amounts of nitrogen to maintain good turf growth without encouraging excessive thatch on putting greens. However, we also implement regular verticutting, core aeration, and sand topdressing on a regular basis to reduce thatch and organic matter.

Putting green collars are the areas directly adjacent to putting surfaces. These areas are generally not maintained as aggressively with verticutting and core aeration, yet they receive the same or more sand topdressing as the putting surfaces each year. In addition to regular topdressing, aeration plugs and debris from cultivation practices are often pushed into the collars, resulting in additional sand being deposited. Lastly, mowers pick up sand with the morning dew, and the rollers often deposit sand when mowers turn on the putting green collars. Eventually, the collars become slightly elevated, disrupting golf course playability and turf health.

Read the rest of this article

Plant Growth Regulators In Bentgrass Turf Areas

Thoughts and trends in the use of a valuable management tool

by Dr. Cale Bigelow, associate professor of Agronomy-Turfgrass Science, Purdue University

The focus of this article is plant growth regulators (PGRs) and how they can be used as a management tool for golf turf. My goal is to offer current insights, share some personal thoughts, and offer cautions and suggestions to maximize the effectiveness of their use.

Ethephon (Proxy), flurprimidol (Cutless), mefluidide (Embark T & O), paclobutrazol (Trimmit), and trinexapacethyl (Primo MAXX) are the primary growth regulator active ingredients currently used on fine, cool-season turf. Most golf course managers use or have used these products at one time or another. One main reason to use a PGR is to suppress vertical leaf growth. Aside from less mowing and reduced scalping potential, regularly applied PGRs provide smoother and more uniform playing surfaces, but there are many other beneficial effects. In terms of increased lateral spreading, the effects are rather variable. Rooting effects are always a concern, but for PGRs, negative effects on rooting are extremely rare. In fact, there are actually some positive rooting effects from top-growth suppression, but do not expect huge differences.

There are many other possible benefits, such as seedhead suppression (mefluidide and ethephon are most effective), higher shoot density, improved color, shade tolerance, reduced water consumption, and dollar spot suppression (flurprimidol and paclobutrazol are most effective for this purpose, with paclobutrazol offering slightly more suppression).

Read the rest of this article



Overregulation can result in turfgrass injury and is usually more damaging to *Poa annua* than to creeping bentgrass. The *Poa annua* in this example is experiencing much more severe regulation than the adjacent bentgrass.

2012 USGA Green Section Education Conference

If you were unable to attend the Green Section Education Conference at the 2012 Golf Industry Show we have good news!

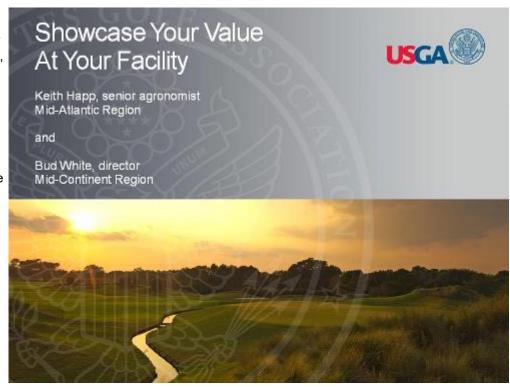
by the USGA Green Section staff

For the 35th consecutive year, the annual Green Section Education Conference was held in conjunction with the 2012 Golf Industry Show (GIS). This year's program, held on March 2, addressed the theme, "Improving Your Golf Course Management Odds." The Green Section's staff totals 420+ years of experience, and the session highlighted some of the lessons learned and changes witnessed in the turfgrass management field.

We are conscious of the fact that economic challenges have made it more difficult for people to attend the GIS, and, with this in mind, we are sharing the Green Section presentations in this publication. Over the coming weeks you will find written summaries of the presentations and links to the video of the actual conference presentations.

The first presentation was entitled, "Showcase Your Value At Your Facility" and was jointly delivered by Keith Happ and Bud White.

Watch the video



Regional Updates



Florida Region

The Annual Dry Season Is Upon Us





(L) When soils develop localized dry spots they begin to repel water and are difficult to rewet. (R) Cart traffic in drought-stressed areas should be avoided. The additional stress can cause damage that will take several weeks to recover.

Florida experiences more rain than most regions, but March through May is generally quite dry. This year is no exception. Many non-irrigated turf areas, such as roadsides, have turned tan to brown from lack of water. Most golf courses have remained a healthy green color due to regular irrigation, but are beginning to experience off-color conditions from localized dry spots.

Localized dry spots occur as the soil dries out and becomes hydrophobic. A hydrophobic soil repels water and becomes difficult to re-wet. Repeated hand-watering or irrigation cycles, coupled with supplemental aeration and/or wetting agents are necessary to reduce hydrophobic conditions and improve turf quality. Once the turf becomes stressed from localized dry spots, it can take several weeks of irrigation to turn green again.

Read the rest of this update



Southeast Region

Dick Schulz Awarded USGA's Ike Grainger Award

The USGA is pleased to honor Mr. Dick Schulz with the USGA's Ike Grainger Award for 25 years of dedicated service as a USGA committee volunteer. The award was presented to Mr. Schulz at the 2012 USGA Green Section SE Regional Meeting March 27at the Grandover Resort in Greensboro, N.C., by USGA Executive Committee Member Mr. Gene McClure.

The award was named in honor of Ike Grainger, a past USGA president and Rules of Golf authority for many decades. Ike lived for nearly 105 years and his service to the game was legendary. The USGA established the Ike Grainger Award to recognize persons who have volunteered on behalf of the USGA for no less than 25 years.

Dick Schulz is well known to many involved with turfgrass management and the game of golf in the southeastern U.S. He served as



Mr. Dick Schulz (left) received the USGA lke Grainger Award at the USGA Green Section SE Regional Meeting March 27. Green Section SE

superintendent at the Atlanta Country Club and in 1990 became an owner of The Oaks Course just outside of Atlanta, Ga. This public golf course has a reputation for being a fun and enjoyable place for golfers of all skill levels.

Region agronomists Chris Hartwiger (center) and Patrick O'Brien (right) also attended this event.

Read the rest of this update

66th Annual Southeast Turfgrass Conference set for April 23-24

Plans are set for the 66th Annual Southeast Turfgrass Conference April 23-24 at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center. Co-sponsors of this meeting include the USGA Green Section, UGA Extension, USDA, ABAC, GTA, GGCSA, and the UGA Coastal Plain Experiment Station. This meeting will be enjoyable for anyone associated with golf including superintendents, club managers, golf professionals, golf course owners, architects, Green and Golf Committees, and any golfer interested in the topics. This year's format will be a little different. We begin with a dinner April 23 and have a meeting and tour of turf plots April 24.

To see the line-up of conference speakers and activities, as well as registration information, <u>read the rest of this update</u>.



Mid-Atlantic Region

Enjoy The Great Spring Weather

Recent Green Section Turf Advisory Service (TAS) visits to golf courses in Virginia confirmed that the record-breaking warm weather has had a positive effect on the warm-season grasses and golf. Courses in southern and Tidewater Virginia have bermudagrass as their primary fairway, tee and rough grass. There are a handful of different varieties grown throughout the state, but most varieties have greened-up and are starting to grow. As a result, rounds are up and revenue is up. This is good news for the golf industry, which is working its way through an economic depression that has included less play and declining memberships.

The early spring also brings some negative agronomic consequences like disrupted timings for *Poa annua* seedhead control sprays, early emergence of a number of insect pests and an earlier than normal germination of weed grasses. In more than forty years of visiting golf courses, I have never seen crabgrass germinate in March as it did this year.

As a general statement, we are about four to five weeks ahead of "normal" (whatever that is) weather patterns. During a recent Turf Advisory Service visit (TAS), I had the opportunity to sample soil temperatures. At this time of year we normally see soil temperatures in the 30 to 40 degree Fahrenheit (F) range. However, it has been common this spring (and it is now spring) to see readings in high 50's (F) to the mid 60's (F). These elevated temperatures have prompted urgency with regard to implementation of several programs normally performed in early to mid April. The grass is growing!

Read the rest of this update



Northwest Region

Conference of Olympic Proportion

The final spring conference for the USGA Northwest Region was recently held at Waverly Country Club (Portland, Ore), and it turned out to include Olympic connections and a good bye. Green Section Agronomists Larry Gilhuly and Derf Soller led off the program discussing fertilizer and pesticide regulations currently under review, and a look at dealing with *Poa annua*.

From his new position at Golf House, John Bodenhamer, USGA senior managing director of Rules, Competitions & Equipment Standards, gave an update to a receptive crowd about the direction the USGA is heading. John returned to his old stomping grounds and saw a lot of familiar faces in the crowd. Until seven months ago, he served as the CEO and executive director of the Pacific Northwest Golf Association, the CEO and executive director of the Washington State Golf Association, and executive director of the Pacific Coast Golf Association.

Read the rest of this update

USGA Green Section - Turf Advisory Service

For more than 80 years, the USGA Green Section's sole mission has been to collect and distribute information on proper construction and maintenance of golf courses.

First started in 1953, this service permits individual facilities to reap the benefits of on-site visits by highly skilled USGA agronomists located in Green Section offices throughout the country. Each agronomist visits more than 100 courses annually. Their experience helps golf course staff and officials produce the best possible golf turf for the dollars that can be spent. The TAS's purpose is not to tell anyone how to run a golf course or what products to buy. Rather, it seeks to bring a wealth of information and an impartial yet concerned perspective regarding turfgrass growth requirements, how these requirements might best be managed for golf, and ideas that other golf courses have found to be beneficial.

The Turf Advisory Service is used by the biggest and smallest golf courses. Golf keeps America beautiful, and day after day, year after year, the Green Section helps golf courses produce better turf for better golf. Your golf course should be a TAS subscriber.

Turf Advisory Service Brochure
The Value Of A USGA Turf Advisory Service Visit
Sample TAS Report
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The Green Section agronomists are the most knowledgeable, respected, and impartial golf-turf consultants in the world. Backed by the USGA, the Green Section's services provide dependable recommendations that course officials can count on.

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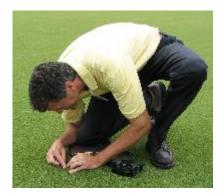
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Green Section Record Archive

Looking for a previous issue of the *Green Section Record?*

The *Green Section Record* has been published under various names since 1921 and is composed of an amazing collection of full-text articles and photos. This collection is stored and maintained by the wonderful library staff at Michigan State University in the **Turfgrass Information File (TGIF)**. All past issues of the *Record*, including this one, can be accessed free-of-charge by following this link.

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The USGA Green Section Portal

A Valuable, Free Resource

Take a minute to visit the Green Section's portal at http://gsportal.usga.org to find information regarding upcoming live webcasts and links to recordings of more than 30 previously-delivered webcasts and announcements of upcoming USGA Green Section activities, education conferences, and meetings.

Visit the USGA Green Section Portal

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