February 17, 2012 -- Volume 50, Number 04

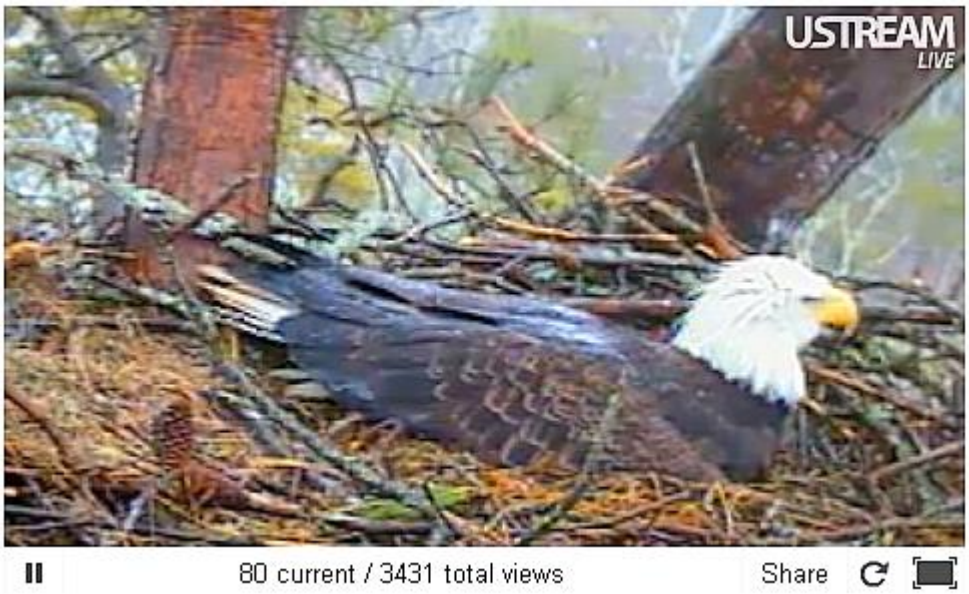
Elliott and Eloise Take Up Golf!

The Harrison Bay Eagle Cam At The Bear Trace Golf Course

The USGA has an eagle in its logo, and now we have real eagles to go with it. The Green Section provided a grant to The Bear Trace golf course at Harrison Bay State Park (Harrison, Tenn.) to follow the nesting activities of a pair of bald eagles located on the golf course. Affectionately named Elliott and Eloise, the pair are using the nest for a second year after successfully fledging two eagles last year.

On February 11 the first egg was laid, followed by egg number two on February 14. The eagle nest is located in a 75-foot-tall pine tree behind one of the greens. If all goes according to plan, the eaglets should hatch in about 35 days, with both parents helping to incubate the eggs during this time period.

The project is led by Paul L. Carter, certified golf course superintendent, and his staff. You can watch the progress through the eagle cam by logging onto the **Harrison Bay Eagle Cam**.



Elliott or Eloise?

Turfgrass Disease Diagnosis

Proper Sample Preparation is the First Step in the Process of Disease Diagnosis

by Dr. Steve Kammerer

When lumped with all other day-to-day tasks, disease management can be one of the most challenging problems that face golf course superintendents. Sometimes when problems arise on turfgrasses, an unknown "disease" is the presumed culprit. Sample diagnostics can be useful in identifying the primary potential pathogens and when they are

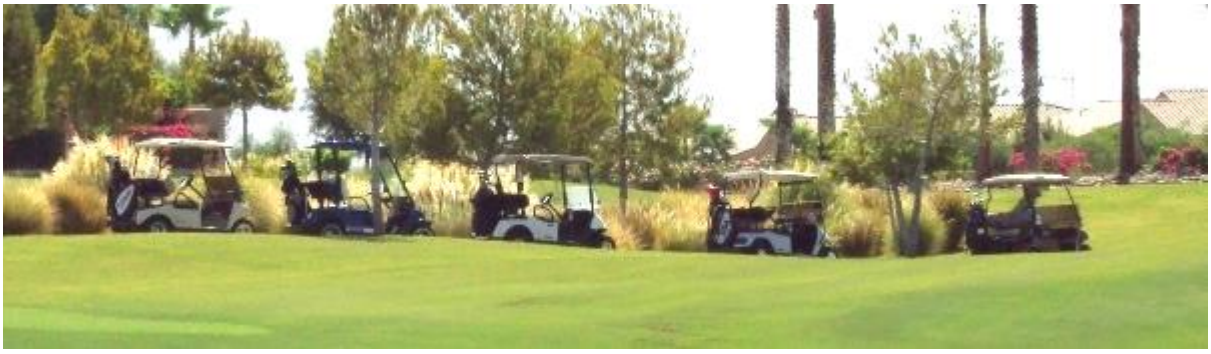
most likely to be infecting. This information is critically important in designing an agronomic program for prevention of diseases. This article is a short guide to taking the right steps to diagnosing problems associated with pathogens and extrapolating the results of a turfgrass diagnostic summary.

Read the rest of this article

Disease diagnosis should not be rushed, if possible. Proper incubation can help identify causal pathogens so that effective treatment can be implemented.

Turf Twister #1

Five Players - Five Carts



Maybe they just don't like each other.

Q: The majority of our members drive personal carts on the golf course and often do not ride with their golfing partner. As a result, we see three, four or even five carts per group. Do these additional carts produce more damage to the turf? What can we do to change this? (California)

A: Golf course superintendents are all too familiar with the damage incurred to soil structure and turfgrass caused by excessive cart traffic. A typical foursome with two carts will impact about 124,000 square feet of turf (on a 6,200 yard golf course), while the same foursome with four carts (or even five in this image) impacts nearly 250,000 square feet. All carts impart some turf damage; the more carts, the greater potential injury.

We recommend that you develop a written policy on golf cart operation, and implement penalties for cart operation violations. As an example, a first offense could result in a written warning, a second offense a formal admonition from the board, and the third offense could result in suspension of cart privileges for a specified amount of time. The cart policy should be carefully explained and well distributed, and each member should be required to register for cart privileges in the pro shop. Additional reading on this controversial subject can be found by clicking on the following link:

Letting the numbers tell the story on cart damage

Turf Twister #2

Using Synthetic Practice Tees For Winter Play

Although not as enjoyable as the real thing, a well-constructed artificial practice tee can prove invaluable during certain times of the year.

Q: A few years ago our golf course installed a synthetic tee at the back of the practice facility so that golfers could use it throughout the winter months. Playability from the synthetic surface is actually better than most of us anticipated, but with temperatures being so warm and frosts limited this winter we would prefer to play from the 'real' tee. Any reason why we shouldn't be allowed to tee it up on the turf during warm days? (Illinois)

A: Understandably, warmer weather this winter has generated more opportunities to practice, but, keep in mind, the turf is not actually growing even if it is green. Whereas air temperatures may warm to comfortable levels for a few hours on any given day to enjoy golf and melt frost, soil temperatures are still too cool to generate active turf growth. If the turf is not actively growing then it is has little traffic tolerance and no ability to recover from divots. Any divots or wear areas created now will persist for months and likely not fill in until early summer for cool-season turfgrasses and mid-summer for warm-season species.

Keep in mind that as soils freeze and thaw throughout the winter and spring, golf course playing areas are more vulnerable to soil compaction. This eventually requires additional aeration later in the growing season to correct the problem. Furthermore, when turf is dormant and off color, winter play slows its spring green-up and reduces turf vigor. This condition will persist into the golfing season and oftentimes results in more fertilizer and pesticides being needed during the growing season to improve weakened turf.

Winter play generates many questions each year for the Green Section staff, and there are very real risks involved for the turf and your golf course. Sometimes consequences are immediately noticeable, and sometimes they are not realized until later in the year. At any rate, it was a wise decision to install synthetic turf to allow for winter play, and it is just as wise to use it while the 'real' turf is resting.

For more information on winter play, please read any of the following articles:

Playing Par with Jack Frost

Politics, Religion and Winter Play on Greens

Too Hot to Handle

Regional Updates

Florida Region
*By **Todd Lowe**, agronomist*

The Winter Goods, Bads and Uglies

Florida is in the midst of the peak of the winter golfing season, and many Turf Advisory Service visits have been conducted throughout the region. North Florida is quite different than South Florida with regards to the degree of winter dormancy and stresses that can occur. Visits to most courses in the northern part of the region have shown good turf quality and few problems. However, many course visits in the southern part of the state have focused on disease problems and mechanical wear.

The rest of this update provides examples of what is good, bad and ugly in the region.

Read the rest of this update

Southeast Region

*By **Chris Hartwiger**, senior agronomist*

Summer Starts In Winter: The 2012 Ultradwarf Bermudagrass Field Trip

On February 7 and 8, approximately 15 to 20 turf professionals gathered in the Atlanta, Ga., area to discuss planning for putting green conversion projects in the summer where bentgrass putting greens will be replaced with an ultradwarf bermudagrass. Our trip began at The Oaks Course in Covington where we met with Course Owner and Professional Dick Schulz and Golf Course Superintendent Curtis Singleton. They shared with the group how they made the conversion in 2005 on a limited budget and in a tight time frame. While observing several of the outstanding putting surfaces at The Oaks, we also discussed winter management of ultradwarfs and shared tips for success.

Read the rest of this update

Northeast Region

*By **Jim Skorulski**, senior agronomist*

Mild Weather Complicates Late Winter Decisions

The winter weather extremes continue in New England and across the Northeast. The warm temperature anomaly this winter dominates the minds of turf managers and golfers, albeit in much different ways. Most golfers see the warm weather as a unique opportunity to play golf. Superintendents see the open winter in a slightly less positive light considering the potential impacts the mild temperatures will bring later in spring. No matter how you stand on the winter play issue, there will be some cost in terms of wear and tear associated with keeping greens open to play through the winter. The extent of that injury depends on the volume of play and weather conditions that occur over the next three to four weeks.

Read the rest of this update

Mid-Atlantic Region

*By **Keith Happ**, senior agronomist*

The Most Asked Question Remains, "How About The Weather?"

At the writing of this update, the weather has turned more seasonal with temperatures within the expected range for this time of year. However, recent Turf Advisory Service visits have provided evidence that, in many cases, the soil is not frozen and there is a very good chance that winter hardiness (the turf's anti-freeze mechanism) is all but gone. We have just passed the halfway point for the winter, and, while the days are getting longer, we still have a way to go before the grass grows consistently.

Resist the temptation to mow if at all possible. Mowing stimulates growth and will physically remove snow mold protection. If it gets very cold (it is predicted to be in the single digits in the northern tier of the region), plant health could be compromised, particularly if wet weather occurs prior to the drop in temperatures. The potential for crown hydration damage is still real. If something has to be done, roll rather than mow and topdress to insulate and protect the turf. Both strategies will pay off as we get closer to spring. These are not compromises; they are wise agronomic practices that will result in better turf conditions later in the year. The mild weather this year has provided bonus playing time for golfers so do what is necessary to allow them to enjoy the course while still protecting the turf.

Read the rest of this update

North Central Region

*By **Bob Vavrek**, senior agronomist*

Wishful Thinking

The Green Section office in Wisconsin always receives a few additional inquiries about Japanese beetle grub survival every time a mild winter occurs. Everyone wants to hear that a lack of snow cover and above average temperatures will disrupt the life cycle of this pest and ultimately reduce or eliminate populations overwintering grubs.

A little help from Mother Nature regarding grub control would be a welcome bonus considering the high cost of pesticide treatments for fairways and roughs, where most turf loss occurs, versus the more modest expense of treating only a few acres of putting surface where relatively little grub injury is typically observed.

To make matters worse, courses affected by the most severe infestations of grubs are often in sites where Japanese beetle populations have just become well established as they slowly migrate westward across the Region. There tends to be minimal natural control of grubs or adult beetles from disease, parasites, etc. for as long as five to eight years when they invade new turf. During this time, beetle populations can go hog wild and make life miserable for superintendents who are not yet familiar with the direct and indirect effects of grubs making a permanent home in high quality turf.

Read the rest of this update

A Sure Bet While In Las Vegas

2012 USGA Green Section Education Program

Golf Industry Show - Las Vegas
March 2, 2012 10 a.m. - noon

Improving Your Golf Course Management Odds

Presentation	Presenter
Showcase your Value at your Facility. *Highlight your skill at knowing where to cut and not to cut in the maintenance budget.*	Keith Happ, USGA Mid-Atlantic Region and Bud White, USGA Mid-Continent Region
The Best Turf Tips	USGA Green Section staff
Turfgrass Microbes - some practical perspectives	Dr. David Zuberer, Texas A&M University
Presentation of the 2012 USGA Green Section Award to Dr. Wayne Hanna	Patrick O'Brien, USGA
If I Were the Emperor of Golf for a Day *Often, golfers, committees, and tradition determine the golf course operations. It may be time to shift the paradigm.*	David Oatis, USGA Northeast Region

More Best Turf Tips	USGA Green Section staff
The Fun Factor *Understanding what makes golf fun will be good for your bottom line.*	Chris Hartwiger, USGA Southeast Region
The Best Turf Tips Aren't Done	USGA Green Section staff
Things I Wish our Superintendent Knew - *Perspectives from the Green Committee*	Pat Gross, USGA Southwest Region

2012 USGA Green Section National and Regional Conferences

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

March 2, 2012	Las Vegas Hotel & Casino	Las Vegas, NV

MID-ATLANTIC REGION

March 20, 2012	Oakmont Country Club	Oakmont, PA
March 27, 2012	DuPont Country Club	Wilmington, DE

MID-CONTINENT REGION

April 2, 2012	Belmar Golf Course	Norman, OK
December 12, 2012	Overland Park Convention Center	Overland Park, KS

NORTHEAST REGION

February 7, 2012	Rhode Island Convention Center	Providence, RI
March 15, 2012	Alpine Country Club	Demarest, NJ
March 20, 2012	Blue Hill Country Club	Canton, MA
March 27, 2012	Oak Hill Country Club	Rochester, NY

SOUTHEAST REGION

March 27, 2012	Grandover Resort	Greensboro, NC

NORTHWEST REGION

February 8, 2012	Peaks and Prairies GCSA	Sheridan, WY
March 26, 2012	Waverley Country Club	Portland, OR

SOUTHWEST REGION

March 12, 2012	Ruby Hill Golf Club	Pleasanton, CA
March 26, 2012	Gainey Ranch Golf Club	Scottsdale, AZ

FLORIDA REGION

May 18, 2012	Naples Beach Hotel	Naples, FL

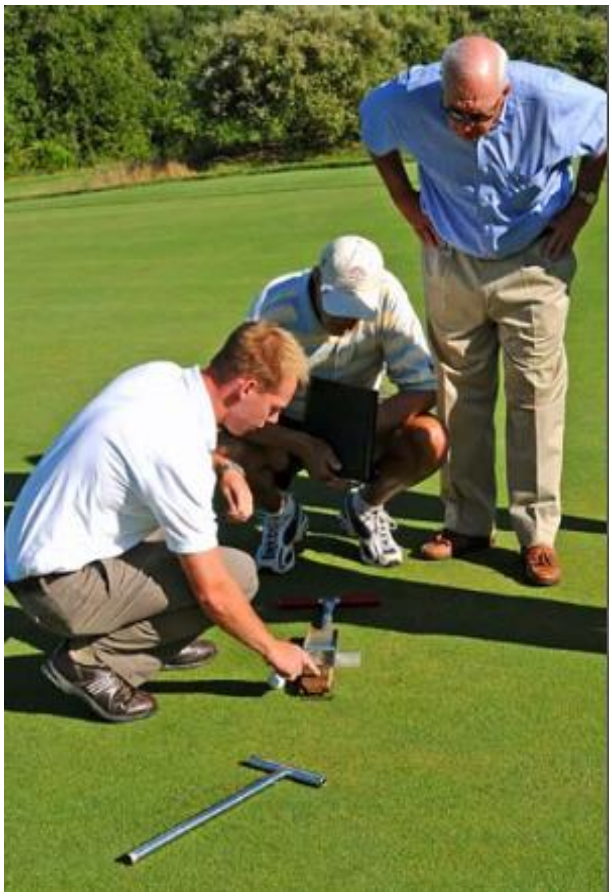
USGA Green Section - Turf Advisory Service

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
Tips On Getting The Most From A TAS Visit
Services And Fees
Contact Green Section Staff



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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By the USGA Green Section Staff

Each *Green Section Record* issue includes articles and information that appeal to golfers and those who work in the game. Please help us distribute this publication as widely as possible. The best way to do this is to click the "Forward to a Friend" button below.

Thanks for your help!

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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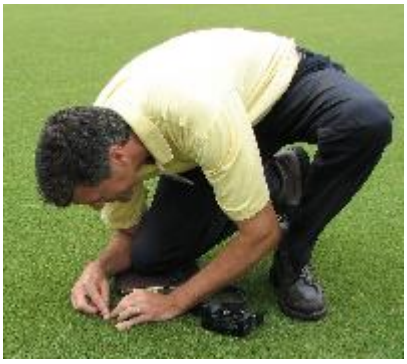

Looking for something?

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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USGA Green Section
P.O. Box 708
Far Hills, NJ 07931-0708
908.234.2300

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