



GREEN SECTION RECORD



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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.

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. **This is the fourth presentation in the series.**

In this recorded video, Todd Lowe, senior agronomist of the Florida Region, shares an innovative technique to reclaim green perimeters with core aeration plugs.

[Watch the video](#)



Gypsum And Other Calcium Sources

Their properties and chemical processes when applied to soil

by [Dr. Jim Walworth](#), Department of Soil, Water and Environmental Science, University of Arizona.

Calcium can help stabilize the aggregate structure of soils. The most commonly used calcium sources include gypsum, agricultural lime, and a few other calcium salts. In some soils, existing calcium minerals can be dissolved, releasing the calcium they contain. It is important to be familiar with the properties of these various calcium materials and to understand the chemical processes that occur when additives are applied to soil.

In this article, Dr. Walworth discusses various sources of calcium and how they react with the soil. He clarifies one of the most difficult, yet most important aspects of soil management - how best to utilize calcium to improve soil structure.

[Read the rest of this article](#)



Sulfuric or sulfurous acid applied directly to a calcareous soil creates a reaction whereby lime is dissolved, producing calcium sulfate, carbon dioxide (seen as the fizzing bubbles), and water.

Isn't It Time For A Second Opinion?

Use the USGA's Green Section Turf Advisory Service (TAS) for all it's worth.

by [Mack Saunders and Matt Shaffer](#)

Did you ever think of asking for a second opinion on a medical problem or some other issue you were facing? The obvious answer is "yes." In today's world of business, consultants are used every day and in any number of ways. Many who are reading this article are probably "consultants" in some form or another. It therefore makes sense to use consultants on your golf course. Where does one go for the best consulting services?

Guess what? Such an expert opinion is available for your golf course turfgrass maintenance and management problems from the USGA, the governing body of golf. The USGA is a nonprofit organization that exists for the good of the game of golf. When it comes to most issues associated with the game, the final word is usually from the USGA. The USGA, among other roles, has been supporting an on course agronomic consulting service for nearly 60 years. This service is known as the Turf Advisory Service (TAS) and is provided by the USGA Green Section. The Green Section has professional agronomists on staff who cover the entire country, plus Canada and Mexico, and can be scheduled for either a half-day or full-day on-site visit to your golf course. Merion Golf Course Superintendent Matt Shaffer and USGA Green Section Committeeman Mack Saunders have used the USGA Turf Advisory Service for years and highlight the following key benefits they and their golf courses have received.



**Mack Saunders, USGA
Green Section
Committeeman**



**Matt Shaffer, Director of
Golf Course Operations,
Merion Golf Club**

[Read the rest of this article](#)

Turf Twister

Q: How often can we roll our bentgrass/*Poa annua* greens without causing turf injury? (Nevada)

A: Research from Oregon State ([Can Annual Bluegrass Putting Greens Be Healthy And Fast?](#)) and the University of Arkansas ([High Frequency Rolling On A Sand-Based Putting Green](#)) revealed that rolling with traditional greens rollers can be applied on a frequent schedule (three to seven days per week) on healthy turf. Rolling is often used on a rotating schedule with mowing during periods of slow growth, as in the winter, or during extreme heat to reduce mowing stress yet maintain acceptable putting speed and quality. Furthermore, high intensity rolling (more than once daily) can be employed on a temporary basis up to several weeks in preparation for events without causing significant turf injury.



Green Section Internships Awarded For 2012

by the USGA Green Section Staff

For the 15th year, the USGA Green Section has awarded internships to outstanding turfgrass management students. During 2012, the Green Section will provide the opportunity for 11 students to travel with the Green Section staff on Turf Advisory Service visits. Each intern will travel for one week with a USGA agronomist between the months of May and August. The internship program provides students with a broader view of the golf course industry and the opportunity to learn about golf course maintenance through the perspective of the Green Section agronomists. More information about the internship program can be found in the Course Care section of the USGA's website ([2012 USGA Green Section Interns](#)).

Intern Name	Year	University	Advisor
Lisa Beirn	Ph.D. program	Rutgers University	Dr. Bruce Clarke
James Bryson	Junior	Delaware Valley College	Dr. Doug Linde
Robert Butler	Senior	University of Nebraska	Dr. Zac Reicher
Robert Cross	M.S. program	Clemson University	Dr. Bert McCarty
Matthew Elmore	Ph.D. program	University of Tennessee	Dr. Jim Brosnan
Tyler Johanson	Junior	University of Florida	Dr. Jason Kruse
Matthew Lyons	Senior	Utah State University	Dr. Paul Johnson
Anthony Minniti	Junior	University of Connecticut	Dr. Karl Guillard
Ty Patton	M.S. program	Oregon State University	Dr. Rob Golembiewski
Trent Tate	M.S. program	University of Georgia	Dr. Paul Raymer
Adam Wepfer	Junior	University of Wisconsin	Dr. Doug Soldat

Regional Updates

The USGA Green Section agronomists see an amazing variety of issues and challenges as they visit golf courses across the country. Be sure to read the highlights of each region since many of the topics covered apply to courses everywhere.



Mid-Atlantic Region

Replace, Repair and Rake

The Greater Pittsburgh Golf Course Superintendents Association and the First Tee of Pittsburgh combined their talents to teach kids about caring for the course. They recently gathered at the Bob O'Conner Golf Course and spent an enjoyable day working with the young people that represent the future of the game. Read this article to see how your association and course can host a similar event. [View this update](#)

A Return to Normal

The warm spring has turf off to a great start but the unusual weather may call for some changes in plans. Also, a decline in the appearance of bentgrass does not always mean disease damage is imminent. [To learn more view this update.](#)



Southeast Region

Neither Hurricanes, Nor Floods, Nor Tornadoes....

Many of us have heard the postman's motto over years:

"Neither rain, nor snow, nor sleet, nor hail shall keep the postmen from their appointed rounds."

Perhaps the following might be an unofficial early 21st century motto for superintendents in the southeast:

"Neither Hurricane Katrina, nor the 2007 drought, nor the Nashville floods, nor the Alabama tornadoes will keep the golf course superintendent from their appointed tasks."

This update provides many useful links to track almost every aspect of the weather, regardless of the part of the country in which you live. [View the update.](#)



North Central Region

A Penny Saved Is A Penny Earned

As a golf course superintendent, your first challenge was convincing those who pay the bills that the old *Poa annua* and creeping bentgrass greens were becoming more unreliable each year due to a combination of stressful weather conditions and unreasonable expectations for fast, flawless playing surfaces throughout the season. You did your homework, presented your case and, with a little help from your friends (i.e. Green Section agronomist), you are now the proud owner (well, caretaker) of brand spanking new creeping bentgrass greens. Then you see it! It's back! What can be done? [To find out, view this update.](#)



Northeast Region

Hold On To Those Roots

The season is progressing nicely to date and I believe most managers are happy with the state of their turf as the beginning of summer approaches. The rooting I have observed in putting greens has generally been good in well-managed soil- and sand-based greens. But then again that is what we expect to see in late May with optimal soil temperatures and no extraneous events. It is critical to create optimal conditions for root development in spring, and equally important to do whatever possible to maintain that root mass as long into summer as possible. This can be very challenging, and at times impossible, with annual bluegrass greens.

To learn about the factors that impact rooting, [view this update](#)

Northwest Region



Man Is A Dog's Best Friend

When you think about it, golf courses may be the perfect playground for a dog. Lots of animals to chase, plenty of water to drink or go for a swim and ample room for exercise are just the start. For dogs, perhaps the best part of a golf course are the many humans that need to be sniffed, spoken to, tail wagged for and snacks consumed from. Yes, a golf course is the perfect place for a dog and we see them frequently during Turf Advisory Service (TAS) visits. Fortunately, canines offer many benefits to your golf course. To see a few examples you may or may not have considered, [view this update](#).



Florida Region

Early Overseed Transitioning

While many golf facilities have moved away from winter overseeding in the Florida Region, it is still a practice that some courses conduct to improve turf color. Some golf courses are struggling with overseed transition at this time. If multiple stress factors occur within a given area, severe turf thinning will occur. To learn more about these stress factor, [view this update](#).

The Rainy Season Has Arrived For Some, But Not All

Unless one makes the more than 10-hour drive from Pensacola in the northwest corner of Florida to Miami in the southern end of the peninsula, few people can appreciate how big Florida really is. It is also human nature to generalize or assume that the exact same weather conditions are being experienced throughout the entire state. In fact, extremely diverse weather conditions can exist throughout the state. To learn more, [view this update](#).



Mid-Continent Region

Recovery From Drought Takes Time And Warm Weather

The Mid-Continent Region has been blessed with a mild winter and wonderful spring after enduring the severe drought of 2011. Turfgrass and tree recovery was enhanced by the mild winter and the early, warm spring. Unfortunately, it seems that many golfers have underestimated the long-term impact of the drought and are already impatient for bermudagrass to recover and re-establish a smooth, dense turf. To learn more, [view this update](#).



Southwest Region

It's Seventy Degrees Outside, Why Is The Course Still Closed?

In the Reno and Lake Tahoe region, the lack of rain in Reno and snow during the winter months has resulted in significant and widespread turf loss. As a result, many courses were forced to open later than expected. Given the recent warm weather, the delay in opening has come under much scrutiny by the golfing public. It is not uncommon to hear golfers question why the course is closed and why many courses experienced turf loss in such a dry winter. This update is meant to educate golfers about the hazards of cold, dry weather to high elevation courses. To learn more, [view this update](#).

Right man, wrong club

by the USGA Green Section Staff

In the May 11, 2012 issue of the **Green Section Record**, we ran an excerpt from the Robert Sommers book, "[Golf Anecdotes - From the Links of Scotland to Tiger Woods](#)". The brief article discussed how ropes came into use on the golf course - a direct result of the invention of the wooden tee by Dr. William Lowell. Unfortunately, the Sommers article identified Dr. Lowell as a member of the wrong club. We received the following cordial email correcting the mistake.

As the President of Maplewood Country Club, I respectfully submit this email and direct same to the Editor of the recent Green Section Record dated May 11, 2012.

There is an article pertaining to the origins of roping on golf courses, and contained therein is a reference to the famed Dr. Lowell, who is an acknowledged inventor of the 'Ready Tee'. However, the cited reference incorrectly identifies Dr. Lowell as a Member of Plainfield Country Club. This is either inaccurate or incomplete. We attach the obituary for Dr. Lowell from the June 25, 1954, New York Times, which identifies Dr. Lowell as a Charter Member of the Maplewood Country Club. We have pride for Maplewood's historical contribution to the game of golf and would have been remiss if we did not share this information with you.

We submit this by way of completeness as opposed to criticism and trust it will be received in the collegial spirit in which it is intended.

Gary Potters, president, Maplewood Country Club

[To read the original article follow this link.](#)

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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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.

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