USGA GREEN SECTION RECORD

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ALL THINGS CONSIDERED - A USGA STAFF OPINION

GOLF COURSE AND TURFGRASS MANAGEMENT: FROM ART TO SCIENCE

John Foy, director, Florida Region

Kyle Sweet, CGCS, The Sanctuary Golf Club on Sanibel Island, Fla., emphasizes that it is important to get out of the office, change up your routine, and spend some time on a fairway unit, mow a few greens, or put the paint gun to use marking the course.

In James B. Beard's book, "Turf Management for Golf Courses," it is reported that the first greenkeeper positions in Scotland were established by the end of the 1700s. Trial-and-error experiences of early greenkeepers were the foundation of the art of golf turf culture. The first scientific papers related to turfgrass research were published in the late 1800s, but it was not until the 1920s when the USGA created the Green Section that the development of scientific information relating to golf course turf began to occur. In the article "Maintenance Changes from Art to Art and Science," published in the April 1952 issue of *Golfdom* magazine, Hank Miller, superintendent at Briergate Golf Club in Deerfield, Ill, wrote about the evolution of course management during his career and how science was playing an increasing role. If one takes a moment to contemplate the tremendous advances that have been made in science and technology in every aspect of life over the past 60 years, it is certainly easy to understand why art has become a less recognized component in modern-day course management.

Advances in the science of turfgrass management have greatly improved golf course conditions. However, the art of greenkeeping still plays an important role in course presentation and golfer enjoyment.

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LOW-HANGING FRUIT

LOOKING TO IMPROVE AESTHETICS AND PLAYABILITY ON A BUDGET? BEGIN BY "FIXING" CONTOURS ON GREENS

Dave Oatis, director, Northeast Region

In addition to losing interesting hole locations, shrunken greens often lose their unique character.

Just about everyone wants to improve their golf course. Remaining static, or worse yet going backward, while other courses are upgrading their facilities can be detrimental to business in a competitive industry. Course improvements come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Upgrading agronomic programs to provide better turf and improved playing conditions is a very sound approach. Many golf facilities develop master plans and subsequently implement extensive course renovation projects. However, spending a lot of money on course upgrades does not guarantee success. Poorly conceived master plans can have detrimental effects on playability and the maintenance budget. Even the best course improvements will be met with failure if basic agronomic programs are ignored.

The difference in course improvement programs is partially a reflection of the diverse financial health of golf facilities. Some have the resources to implement expensive, ambitious improvement programs and upgrade maintenance programs, whereas others struggle to find ways of keeping the doors open and meeting daily expenses.

What would you say if I told you of a program that could have a significant and very positive effect on playability at most golf courses and can usually be accomplished without tremendous expense? It probably sounds too good to be true, but the fact is many golf facilities can make major improvements in playability by "fixing" mowing contours.

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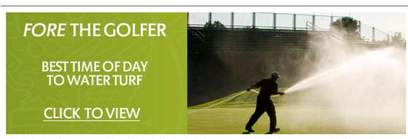

When is the best time to water turf? At night or during the day? The answer will help you better understand golf's use of water, why you're likely to encounter irrigation during your round of golf, and even help in maintaining your home lawn.

The Turfgrass and Environmental Research Committee met in Atlanta during the first week of June to discuss several projects funded by the program. The committee reviewed summaries of 58 research projects that received a total of $960,000 in grant funding from the USGA's Turfgrass and Environmental Research Program during 2013. Members of the committee also heard several presentations from researchers at the University of Georgia.

We all know how much the golf course maintenance industry depends on the sales representatives that travel the country sharing the latest and greatest in equipment and turf-care products. Life on the road can be difficult but it has come a long way since this brief article appeared in The National Greenkeeper in February of 1928. Notice the snow on the ground and the open window.

Below is the caption that accompanied the picture. Be sure and read to the last sentence.

"Lets Go!" Says Jacobsen Salesman

Here is Mr. Einer Brown, representative of the Jacobsen Manufacturing Company, of Racine, Wis., starting out in his new territory through West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland and District of Columbia. Greenkeepers and Green committee chairmen in states named can see how Jacobsen power mowers operate before grass has started to grow this spring, for he has with him a special moving picture projector showing these mowers in action.

REGIONAL UPDATES

REGIONAL UPDATES

The USGA Green Section is divided into eight regions staffed by agronomists who work with golf facilities on care of the golf course. USGA agronomists provide regular regional updates outlining current issues and observations from the field. Be sure to view updates from multiple regions as featured ideas, techniques and solutions to problems often apply to other parts of the country.

NORTHEAST REGION

The elimination of metal spikes from most courses has not completely solved the problem of damage from those who drag and twist their feet.
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MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Despite aggressive control strategies, annual bluegrass weevils have wreaked havoc in parts of the Mid-Atlantic region. The unusually cool spring has likely prolonged adult annual bluegrass weevil activity, further complicating control efforts. Discover the importance of vigilant scouting in this regional update.
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SOUTHEAST REGION

This update provides a variety of links to articles on important bermgrass summer survival strategies.
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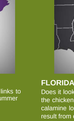

FLORIDA REGION

Does it look like your turf has a bad case of the chicken pox? Don't reach for the calamine lotion quite yet. The spots likely result from efforts to eradicate difficult-to-control weeds like goosegrass, tropical signalgrass or sedges.
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NORTH-CENTRAL REGION

Recent weather has resulted in a flush of turf growth throughout the region leaving many courses littered with difficult-to-dispense clippings. Although clipping management can be frustrating and time consuming, a little creativity and some resourcefulness can help expedite this tedious practice.
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MID-CONTINENT REGION

Golf course superintendent blogs provide tremendous insight into how golf courses are managed to achieve the best playing quality possible while addressing the agronomic needs of the course itself. The blogs are invariably geared toward the golfer in an effort to help players better understand how course maintenance impacts their game. This update features another outstanding blog from the Mid-Continent region.
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NORTHWEST REGION

Without a doubt water use is the most important issue facing golf, and courses across the country are working to reduce the amount of water they use. But what happens if you have too much water? In this regional update discover what one course did to prevent flooding after a particularly catastrophic event in 2013.
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SOUTHWEST REGION

Portability is the focus of this update. Superintendent Kent McCutcheon of the Las Vegas Country Club shares two ideas that could work for you as well.
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