

HOW IT'S DONE



TURF COLORANTS ON BERMUDAGRASS PUTTING GREENS

BY CHRIS HARTWIGER

HOW PUTTING GREEN DIFFICULTY IMPACTS USGA COURSE RATING™ AND SLOPE RATING®

FIRM AND FAST GREENS ARE A CHALLENGE. HOW MUCH DO THEY INFLUENCE COURSE RATING AND SLOPE RATING?

Adam Moeller, agronomist, Northeast Region

The U.S. Open Championship has long been known for being a rigorous test of golf with difficult playing conditions that challenge players' shot-making abilities and mental toughness. Firm, fast putting greens with challenging but fair hole locations are a key aspect of course setup for every U.S. Open. Putting green setup during the U.S. Open, which focuses on firmness and speed, is determined by careful analysis of putting green contours on each hole and anticipated approach shots - i.e., long, medium, short iron, elevated surface, etc. - to various hole locations (Davis, 2007). Therefore, U.S. Open putting green setup changes from year to year because putting green design and course layout varies among different courses.

When determining the appropriate speed and firmness for daily play at your course, the same careful analysis is necessary. Equally important, golfer abilities should be a determining factor of putting green setup. All too often putting green setup is dictated by the best golfers at a course, crying loudly for firmer and faster conditions. One argument for maintaining more difficult putting greens is that putting conditions heavily influence USGA Course Rating™ and Slope Rating®. This sentiment is inaccurate and understanding the USGA Course Rating System™ explains why.

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An increase in putting green speed from 9 feet 6 inches to 10 feet 6 inches will likely only increase the Course Rating™ by 0.2 and the Slope Rating® by 2.

GETTING THE UPPER HAND ON DOLLAR SPOT DISEASE

NEW TECHNOLOGY HAS POTENTIAL TO REDUCE FUNGICIDE INPUTS AND PROVIDE QUALITY PLAYING CONDITIONS

Jim Skorulski, senior agronomist, Northeast Region



Dragging and rolling remain effective practices to shorten the duration of leaf wetness and the severity of dollar spot disease.

Dollar spot disease (*Sclerotinia homoeocarpa*) continues to be a significant pest of golf course turf. The pathogen attacks most cool- and warm-season turfgrass species. Dollar spot is a persistent and adapting pathogen that has become tolerant of various fungicides and, if left unchecked, can spread to epidemic proportions, leaving playing surfaces scarred and pitted. Consequently, it is no surprise that more money is invested to manage dollar spot disease than any other turfgrass pathogen.

Fungicide programs remain the backbone of most dollar spot management programs. However, the availability of disease-resistant turfgrass cultivars, better knowledge of the pathogen's life cycle, and the development of innovative cultural practices have improved the ability to manage dollar spot and could reduce reliance on fungicides.

The following article reviews some new management tools and ideas that may be utilized in an integrated approach to combat dollar spot disease.

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FOR THE GOLFER

WATERING FOR HEALTHY TURF

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RESEARCH THAT MATTERS

EARLY WEED CONTROL KEY TO BUFFALOGRASS ESTABLISHMENT

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

"CLIMATE IS WHAT WE EXPECT, WEATHER IS WHAT WE GET."

— MARK TWAIN



Standing tall on North Dakota snow, a March blizzard nearly buried utility poles. "I believe there is a rain under here somewhere!"

This image from the [NOAA Photo Library](#) illustrates the importance of historical weather information. Fortunately the [NOAA National Climatic Data Center](#) provides free, detailed weather records of almost every type and as far back as weather records have been kept.

Image ID: wda00958, NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) Collection | Location: Jamestown, North Dakota | Photo Date: March 9, 1966
Photographer: Mr. Bill Koch, North Dakota State Highway Dept | Credit: Collection of Dr. Herbert Kroehl, NGDC

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

September has brought with it a feeling of relief following a benign summer. The worst weather has past, the golf calendar is more manageable, and now is the time to implement important late-summer maintenance practices to prepare your facility for winter.

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MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Summer has finally arrived in the Mid-Atlantic region, albeit in September while many courses are aerating. Keep in mind the abrasive stress associated with working in topdressing sand can be compounded by hot, humid weather.

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SOUTHEAST REGION

Every year, students from universities across the country participate in the USGA Green Section Summer Internship Program. This regional update highlights the experiences of the students that toured the Southeast Region this summer.

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FLORIDA REGION

Some of the world's greatest amateur golfers are competing in The World Amateur Team Championships (WATC) in Karuizawa, Japan, this week. The USGA is on site with the golf course maintenance staff to assist in championship preparations.

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NORTH-CENTRAL REGION

Lee Trevino is credited for once saying: "If you're caught on a golf course during a storm and are afraid of lightning, hold up a 1-iron. Not even God can hit a 1-iron." Humor aside, a recent lightning strike to a putting green in Indiana provides plenty of incentive for golfers to seek immediate shelter when severe weather approaches.

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MID-CENTRAL REGION

Every 99th championship has a story, and for the 89th and final U.S. Amateur Public Links Championship at Sand Creek Station in Newton, Kan., the community stepped up in a big way to assist with daily course preparations.

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NORTHWEST REGION

Trees are a common topic of discussion during USGA Course Consulting Service visits. While trees can provide many benefits to a golf course, they can also negatively impact turf health and pace of play. Discover what one golf facility in Washington has done to help members "see the light" when it comes to getting to the "root" of the problem with trees.

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SOUTHWEST REGION

What if mandatory water restrictions force you to reduce water use at your golf facility by half? What does a 50-percent water cutback look like? Will the course look terrible? Will it play poorly? The results at Pasatiempo Golf Club (Santa Cruz, Calif.) may surprise you.

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