



New Jersey Golf Course Report

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1968 — A Most Difficult Year For Grasses

by Alexander M. Radko,
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You name it and we've had it in '68. This has been a most difficult year for golf turf and unquestionably one of the toughest of all time for courses in the Northeast.

Winter

Desiccation caused for severe weaknesses on several areas of most golf courses, greens in particular were badly affected. Recovery was extremely slow, greens were not up to their usual standard until mid-summer.

Spring

The rains came and the skies were overcast for most of the spring, the sun shone very little. Greens grew soft and weak, they never really "hardened off." This put them at a decided disadvantage going into the summer.

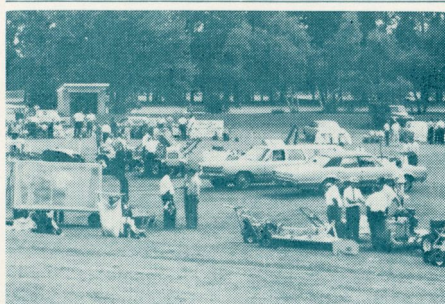
Summer

The sun, high temperatures, high humidity (at nighttime too) caused grasses to be extremely susceptible to wilt and disease. It was impossible to irrigate *without over-watering* if the grasses were to be saved. Superintendents who had automatic systems were able to get around more quickly to syringe. CONTINUOUS GREEN AND FAIRWAY SYRINGING WAS THE ORDER OF THE SEASON. This was very unusual that fairways should need this sort of attention. The period beginning the second week in July through early August was most critical. Every day, weekends included, constant and uninterrupted syringing was required in the attempt to save the grasses, *Poa annua* in particular. Golf car use during these weeks proved to be damaging. Tire marks turned into brown streaks and weeds encroached. This was one period when fairways suffered badly from car use and this unquestionably added to summer weaknesses.

Diseases ran rampant, insect activity was high, and where weaknesses developed, weeds were quick to encroach. Crabgrass invasion was particularly severe. In effect the crabgrass belt

moved north this summer, and the Northeast experienced the kind of invasion that courses in the crabgrass zone normally experience. (The so-called crabgrass zone normally extends from upper Virginia to St. Louis, Missouri, to Philadelphia.) It will take concerted effort on the part of Superintendents over the next year to control this weed.

All in all, it was one of the poorest weather years, and as a result, one of the most difficult management years on record for golf turfgrasses.



The Annual Field Day was again a great success. A record 30 firms participated. The weather was great, for once, and an excellent turnout was shown. Much of the credit goes to Rich Browne, Chairman, and host Jim McNally of Greenbrook C.C.

Tree Poison Was Sprayed By City

by Mel Jones,
Tribune City Hall Reporter

Winnipeg Tribune — Sat., Aug. 3/68 — The deadly weed poison, 2, 4-D, which has affected trees in the plush Eastgate-Westgate-Middlegate areas, came from City of Winnipeg tractor-sprayers. The Tribune learned Friday.

Tests have shown that the chemical spray killed or damaged most of the foliage on trees, garden plants and shrubs.

Parks Superintendent Ole Johanson told The Tribune that 2, 4-D had been used mistakenly in place of DDT during June in the area, but he refused to say whether a city employee had filled the spray machine, or if it had been an act of sabotage.

A secret meeting was held Wednesday night between parks department officials and area residents.

Retired city alderman and lawyer, E. D. Honeyman of 131 Westgate said: "We expect them (the city) to replace the shrubbery and to undo the damage that has already been caused."

One resident, who complained to the city, is considering legal action, and a decision on whether the parks department will pay damages will be made next week following a report from solicitors.

An inventory of damage is being prepared for Tuesday's parks and recreation department meeting.

Mr. Honeyman said the condition of plant life in the area "is worse now than it's ever been. Leaves which were curling up last month, are dropping off their branches. And they are as brown as the ones on the first day of November. If these trees do die," he added, "then we expect them to be replaced."

Mr. Johanson told The Tribune if the city does find itself at fault, the shrubbery — it won't be known until after next summer if it will survive — will be replaced.

The 2, 4-D spraying was supposed to have been DDT to combat budworm.

The above article was taken from the publication of the Canadian Golf Course Superintendents Association, "The Greenmaster," September, 1968.

Activated Charcoal Nullifies Residues In Tests At The University Of Rhode Island

by William F. Munk,
Essex County Agent

Activated charcoal or carbon is widely used to remove impurities from various substances. Agricultural scientists are now finding that it can have new and important uses, even for homeowners. Research at the University of

Rhode Island has shown that harmful residues of chemical weedkillers used in lawns can be nullified by the use of activated charcoal. Charcoal has been used in the past by agriculture in various ways. Today, it is receiving widespread attention by agricultural scientists, with the recently introduced weed-control chemical and the problems of their residues in soils. Several universities are studying the effects of charcoal on various chemical residues. Results indicate that charcoal can inactivate many of them. The tests at the University of Rhode Island have been conducted with activated charcoal and several of the weed control chemicals used on lawns. Weed-killers are a valuable tool for the homeowner. When properly used, they cause few problems. But residues from these chemicals persist in lawns from several weeks to several months depending on the chemical. Pre-emergent crabgrass control chemicals, for instance, must persist in the soil to be effective since crabgrass seed can germinate over a period of four months. A serious problem develops when homeowners try to establish new grass from seed in soils that have been treated with chemicals. Successful seedings can not be made for about six weeks after the use of such broadleaf-type weedkillers as 2, 4-D, Banvel D, MCP, and Silvex. Pre-emergent crabgrass control chemicals such as Azak, Bandane, Betasan, and Dacthal prevent successful seeding for up to several months. Homeowners who plan to make successful seedings can avoid the use of chemicals or wait until it is safe to seed. It is apparent that an easy and economical method of eliminating harmful chemical residues is needed. In the tests at the University of Rhode Island, the chemicals were applied to soil in test areas. Six days after the application of the broadleaf-type chemicals, and seven weeks after the use of pre-emergent crabgrass chemicals, seedings were made with and without the use of activated charcoal. The seeding mixture contained Kentucky bluegrass, red fescue, and colonial bentgrass. Observations were

then made on the stands of grass that developed. The results showed activated charcoal successfully nullified the harmful effects of the chemicals mentioned earlier. Research on the subject is continuing.

A Point To Ponder — Desiccation

by Alexander M. Radko,
Eastern Director,
USGA Green Section

Desiccation is and has been a winter problem for years, but like all problems it doesn't hit home or seem to be important until it happens to you. Last winter was one of the meanest winters for the golf courses in the Northeast in many a year. The winter was open (no snow cover) and windy . . . in fact strong winds blew incessantly day and night and the grasses in exposed areas dried-out. Few escaped injury, and these were principally the newer courses. After the GCSAA Conference we began to get reports of dusty, dry, and crackly turf that was powder-dry in February.

Desiccation can occur on certain areas during years of good snow cover too. Course in the northernmost areas normally enjoy more snow cover than we in the lower New England and Mid-western States; however, even on snow-bound courses strong winds can remove the snow to expose areas which can become desiccated. Superintendents in the northernmost areas soon learned that one way to curb serious injury if desiccation was a threat on a green or tee is to topdress the exposed area heavily in January or February, with double the normal amount of topdressing soil (i.e., two cubic yards per 5,000 instead of one). This affords good protection, and those who have done it swear by it as an excellent treatment to reduce desiccation problems to a minimum.

This past winter others watered as best they could; some rented city water trucks, some watered with their spray tanks—and this helped—if enough water was applied.

Other materials advocated or being tested are polyethylene plastic tarps, polypropylene screens (black and green), snow fences, branches and brush, fertilizers (principally organic), and anti-desiccant materials. In my experience to date, the topdressing technique has been the most successful of all. Additionally, topsoil acts as a smoothing and truing material to keep greens in top form. Not just any soil is suitable, it must be the kind that is normally used for topdressing your greens. Another side benefit is that snow mold fungicides, applied to topsoil after it is spread, will keep the green protected better than if the fungicide were applied alone.

How do you know whether you will need to protect your greens against desiccation this winter? Only time will tell! It isn't possible to forecast this anymore than it is possible to forecast January's exact weather at this time. You must wait and see how the weather breaks. If it is an open and continuously windy winter, as it was from December '67 through February '68, be ready to treat greens that are exposed by mid-January.

If the weather is mild, or if lots of snow falls, there will be less danger that desiccation will occur. But this is what makes the job a challenging one—after one experiences the rigors of summer mortis, it would be helpful to have a relaxing winter. If we could count on it, we'd all be happier when spring rolls around.

Turf Clippings

With snow and ice on the way, we've all been approached by the "pellet" men in recent days. However, a new approach was in evidence this season with the rather noticeable drop in the price of urea. It has apparently always been known that this substance will do very well in removal of ice down to temperatures of about ten degrees, but not until recently has the price been competitive, especially in view of the fact that it will not injure plants in the area.

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"TRU-GREEN" — Liquid chelating agent
(iron, magnesium, etc.)
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"METHAR" & "SUPER METHAR" —
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bent grass
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