



# Turf Times

Monthly  
Update  
May 1995  
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The newsletter from the Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association

## ***NMTMA Meeting at Lincoln Hills Golf Club May 8th***

Northern Michigan Turf Managers Association meeting will be held Monday, May 8, 1995 at the Lincoln Hills Golf Club in Ludington, Michigan. Maynard Garner is the Golf Course Superintendent. Golf will begin with an 11:30 shotgun start. Dinner will be held at 4 p.m., the speaker will be Bruce Wilde, Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Reservations must be made by Friday, May 5, 1995. Please call Rebecca at (616) 843-4666 or fax your reservations to (616) 845-6435.

Cost is \$30 for golf and dinner and \$10 for dinner only. Make checks payable to Lincoln Hills Golf Club, Maynard Garner, Superintendent.

Directions: Take US 31 North/South to US 10. Go west on US 10 to Ludington and through town. (US 10 turns into Ludington Avenue in town). Follow Ludington Avenue almost to the lakeshore. Turn right (north) on Lakeshore Drive. (Watch for Miller's Motel on the Northeast corner, Snyder's Shoreline Inn on the Southwest corner). Take Lakeshore Drive north for approximately two miles, crossing the bridge over Lincoln Lake. The drive to Lincoln Hills Golf Club will be the first road on the left (west) after crossing over the lake. The sign at the entrance will let you know you're in the right place!!



CLIP AND SAVE



### **1995 Meeting Schedule**

May 8th .....	Lincoln Hills Golf Club Ludington
June 19 .....	The Gailes, Oscoda MTF Fundraiser
July 11 .....	White Pine National Hubbard Lake
August 15 .....	The Rose, Leroy
September .....	The Natural, Gaylord NMTMA Fundraiser
October 10 .....	The Legend, Bellaire Chapter Championship

### **- NOTICE - NEXT MEETING:**

June 19th  
The Gailes, Oscoda  
MTF Fundraiser

Watch *Turf Times*  
for details

# Some Observations on The New York Audubon Sanctuary Program

During the winter of 1994 we joined the New York Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and last summer began making changes toward certification. Many of the projects recommended by Audubon were things I had wanted to do for some time, but either there was a lack of funds or a resistance to change by the membership. The unilateral credibility of the Audubon name went a long way toward acceptance of these projects both in funding and perception. We also have found that many of the recommendations by Audubon once implemented had some unexpected results.

Here are a few of the unusual/unexpected situations we have incurred.

We allowed some areas of the fine fescue roughs to grow up. My real desire for this was to reduce mowing time and labor. Unexpectedly, it also greatly effected our Thirteen-Stripe Ground Squirrel problem, since they moved their borrows out of the fairways and into these areas.

Being located between a lake and a marsh we have always had a mosquito problem. The crew could easily go through two or three cases of repellent each summer. Also, we were constantly getting patches of yellow turf with green foot prints in the middle, where golfers had sprayed their legs while standing on the green.

Last spring we erected 14 Bluebird houses. Only one house was occupied by Bluebirds, but all the rest took families of Tree Swallows. Some mornings there were flocks containing hundreds of these birds feeding on the course. Though weather factors may have played into it, there certainly was a marked reduction in mosquito populations, verified by the reduction in repellent use (less than one case used by crew members) and injured greens. We observed no detrimental effects from the great numbers of swallows. They didn't peck greens or cause interference with play. This has prompted us to look into Bat habitat for the same reasons.

One of the hardest areas for my members to accept, was allowing a buffer zone of natural grass to grow around our surface water. I was very attracted to the

reduced labor with the weedwhip, but all they saw was unkept grass and the environmental benefits were not enough to change their minds. Acceptance came when they discovered that the buffer grass stopped a rolling ball from entering the water. Not the original intentions, but everybody's happy.

I have written before about wildflower plantings. Yet, they have certainly been the biggest success. I haven't heard a request for annual flowers since their inception and the positive PR for me to my members is phenomenal. The only down side is the members demand for expansion of the plantings, but I'll live with it since they also except the small extra cost.

The paperwork involved in becoming certified is no small matter. Yet, the benefits to my operation have already far exceeded the cost of joining. I am sure that once certified that work will also be worth it. Unexpectedly, we found that being environmentally prudent didn't cost money, it saved us labor.

Jeffrey T. Dorrell  
Cadillac CC

*The measure of people's real character is what they would do if they knew they would never be found out.*

—J.C. MaCauley

## Classifieds

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# Executive Summary Turfgrass Soil Management Research 1994 Report to the Golf Association of Michigan

## *Phosphate and Potash for Sand Putting Greens*

Most new putting greens are established on sandy mixes which have a low cation exchange capacity and hold nutrients very weakly. Nutrients of particular concern are phosphorus and potassium. Applications of four pounds of P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> applied per 1000 sq. ft. in 1993 and again in 1994 was found necessary to maintain adequate turf color of a Penncross creeping bentgrass putting green which as growing on a mix of 85% sand and 15% peat. Lower rates resulted in poor turf color and deficient levels of phosphorus based on soil tests. Eventually, phosphorus levels should build up in these sands so lower rates should be needed in subsequent years. Potassium soil test studies on established turfs indicate that sands do not hold potassium well. In general, equal amounts of nitrogen and potash are recommended for putting greens growing on sands. For sandy loams and other finer-textured soils the use of soil testing should adequately predict needs for potash. Soil tests for potassium in November this year were lower than expected, likely due to leaching of potassium caused by the higher than normal rainfall in the Lansing area during the summer of 1994. Regular applications of phosphate and potash should be made throughout the growing season for turfs growing on sands.

## *Hydroject Studies*

Research on how best to use the Hydroject aerifier in golf turf management is continuing. One observation from our research in 1994 is that regular treatment with the Hydroject resulted in fewer worm casts on the surface of a putting green. It is not known if this is a result of fewer earthworms in the soil or if they are casting beneath the soil

surface in the channels left by the Hydroject treatment. Superintendents who are pleased with the Hydroject report 4 to 10 treatments per year with an average of 6 times annually, concentrated during the summer months when there is heavy play. Spot treatment of special areas, such as localized dry spots or where traffic is concentrated at entry or exit paths on greens or tees, has been very successful. The appropriate frequency of treatment with the Hydroject will vary with soil and turf conditions.

## *Greens Rolling*

A study to evaluate the impact of rolling greens on ball roll indicated that rolling 3 times per week increased ball roll an average of over 14 inches compared to the unrolled check plots on a putting green mowed at 5/32 inch. By contrast, double mowing increased ball roll about 10 inches compared to the check. Double mowing can be used on a short term basis to increase ball roll, but should not be considered a regular practice because of detrimental effects on the grass.

## *Acknowledgement*

Financial support from the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation and the Golf Association of Michigan provided part of Thom Nikolai's salary. Thom conducts the field research program as well as being actively involved in planning and conducting the Michigan Turfgrass Conference and a number of extension activities. This support is gratefully acknowledged.

—by Paul E. Rieke, Crop & Soil Sciences MSU

## Mechanic's Corner

By James Gautz  
Head Mechanic Cadillac C.C.

During the winter months we use a small John Deere Skip Loader for snow removal. Since we don't have chains for this unit, traction was always a problem. Multiple types of rear weights were tried without real success. Large concrete weights were easily cracked or broken and always presented sharp corners.

Last summer I noticed an ingenious idea for a rear tractor weight, that has solved our problems.

While at the McGuire's Resort the Head Mechanic Ron Greenman showed me one he had devised out of a plastic barrel.

Cutting off the top of a 30 gal. barrel we positioned a three-point hitch two bar crosswise and angled iron out the top for the third point. Filling this with concrete left us with a large heavy weight that was durable and without sharp corners. In the down position it sits level on the floor for easy removal/installation.

This simple weight has greatly improved traction during winter and improved lifting capacity for summer.



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# PRUNING HELPS PROTECT GOLF COURSE TREES

KENT, OHIO— Trees are a major part of the natural beauty that attracts people to a golf course. However, a golf course tree is more than just scenery – it is an integral part of the play of the course.

When you lose key trees, you sacrifice the integrity of the course. Tree removal may change how a hole is played and can decrease per value.

Proper pruning helps golf course superintendents maintain the challenge of the course without compromising the design, says Marianne Waindle, a horticulturist with The Davey Tree Expert Company. "Pruning helps benefit the course not only by keeping trees healthy, but also by shaping trees to direct golfers along a specific path," Waindle says.

There are times when trees can act as a screen that guides golfers down the fairway or toward the next hole. For example, tall, thick-canopied trees on a dogleg add challenge and fun to the game. "In cases like these, prune to encourage both canopy and lower branch growth," Waindle says. "Heavy pruning may create too much space through the trees, which gives golfers a clearer shot toward the green."

Pruning can also elevate a crown, so golfers can more easily retrieve their golf balls without having to wrestle low-hanging branches. Branches pose problems when they overhang old cart paths, as well. People could be injured if they drive into the branches.

To keep key trees available as part of the course, golf course superintendents should concentrate on two aspects of pruning: how often to prune and proper pruning cut placement.

## Pruning Schedule

Set a regular pruning schedule for golf course trees. Len Burkhart, Ph.D., a horticulturist with Davey, recommends a three-year pruning cycle. "Every year, prune one-third of the tree population," Burkhart says. "This helps keep trees healthy while keeping costs down."

Trees that are not on a regular pruning schedule often are radically pruned to achieve the desired form. Workers end up *overpruning* because they don't prune on a regular basis. The tree loses too much foliage, and is unable to produce enough energy for the pruning cut to close properly and quickly. With radical pruning, the tree will slowly decline and may eventually die.

Larger, open cuts also make the tree more susceptible to disease problems, especially canker rot fungi. The fungi weaken the tree's structure and eventually lead to breakage. Large pruning cuts can also indirectly compromise tree health, which makes them more susceptible to pests.

Although maintenance pruning of most shade trees can be done year-round, intensive pruning should be performed in the dormant season. Also, new leaves that emerge the following spring mask cuts made in winter. Pruning in late fall and early winter reduces sap flow from pruning cuts on trees such as conifers, maple, birch and walnut.

Winter pruning also minimizes damage to some tree species. The bark of some trees, such as maple and ash, can easily tear loose during climbing and pruning during the spring flush of growth.

## Proper Pruning Cut Placement

Proper pruning cut placement helps keep trees healthy. Cuts should be made outside the branch collar and branch bark ridge, Burkhart says. The branch collar is the raised or

swollen area surrounding the underside of the branch, and the branch bark ridge is the upward ridge of bark that develops in the branch crotch. "Cuts made flush against the trunk are not recommended, Burkhart says. "They are unnecessarily large and can expose trunk tissue to decay."

To avoid tearing the bark, especially when removing large limbs, make a cut on the underside of the limb, about one-third of the way through, a foot or two out from the trunk. Make a second cut on the top of the limb a few inches farther out from the first cut. As the top cut deepens, the limb's weight breaks the wood fibers back to the undercut. "Because of these two preliminary cuts, most of the limb's weight is removed," Burkhart says. "Then, remove the stub with a final cut made just outside the branch bark ridge and collar."

Wound closure begins from the edge of the pruning cut. This produces a roll of tissue called callus. The callus that develops from a correct cut resembles a round doughnut.

Pruning should only be performed by professional arborists. Improper pruning practices, such as topping, can harm trees and destroy the beauty of the course. Topping is the indiscriminate removal of a tree's main leader and branches, resulting in unsightly stubs. Topping severely disfigures trees and results in "watersprouts"— weak limbs that are susceptible to damage from high winds or other adverse weather.

When pruning, professional arborists consider the tree's branch structure and growth habits to produce the strongest, most attractive plant. Arborists remove branches from their point of attachment to the trunk or another branch. This method eliminates unhealthy, unsightly stubs. Professional arborists also thin the canopy to reduce the amount of

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# Golf Course Expo Expands Trade Show Floor, Sets Dates for '95

ORLANDO, FLA.— Golf Course Expo, the trade exhibition and educational conference sponsored by *Golf Course News*, will be held Nov. 9-10 at the Orange County Convention Center here. Golf course Expo is an educational conference and trade show for superintendents, owners, managers and developers of daily-fee, resort, municipal and semi-private golf courses.

The inaugural Golf Course Expo, held here last November, was a great success, drawing more than 1,200 attendees and 100 exhibitors. In 1995 Golf Course Expo will expand the trade show floor to 100,000 square feet. Shop Talks, vendor-sponsored presentations on the show floor, will be repeated in 1995 and will feature new products and services, solutions, and industry trends. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and interact with the presenters in this informal setting.

The two-day educational program will feature three distinct tracks: Maintenance, Marketing & Management, and Development. The program features speakers from the U.S. Golf Association Green Section as well as industry leaders in managing and marketing profitable, progressive golf operations.

"I've had very positive feedback," said Charlie von

Brecht, publisher of *Golf Course News*, "from many exhibitors who were pleased with the results of the first Golf Course Expo. They are making plans for Golf Course Expo in 1995 and plan to take large spaces."

*Golf Course News* is owned by United Publications Inc., a publisher of specialized business publications based in Yarmouth, Maine. For more information, contact the Conference Group at 207-846-0600.

## PRUNING HELPS PROTECT GOLF COURSE TREES

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high wind damage. The wind blows through, instead of against, the branches.

Pruning is necessary to maintain healthy trees that perform their desired function. When done properly, pruning helps control canopy shape and keeps trees in good health. When trees are in optimal health, they are less prone to pests and diseases that can damage tree health and appearance. Most importantly, proper pruning helps preserve the challenge of tees, fairways, greens — every aspect of the course that adds to its character.

The Davey Tree Expert Company provides tree care and grounds maintenance services and arboricultural and horticultural consulting to utilities and residential, commercial and municipal customers in more than 40 states and five Canadian provinces. Davey is employee-owned with more

*It's what you learn after you know it all that counts.*  
—John Wooden

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