

NORTHERN MICHIGAN TURF MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1983
ANTRIM DELLS GOLF CLUB
ATWOOD, MICHIGAN

FRANK HEMINGER, SECRETARY-TREAS.

1147 SANTO

TRAVERSE CITY, MI. 49684

PHONE: 616-947-9274

The above date and location will be the information relative to our September meeting of our Northern Mich. Turf Managers Ass'n. For the benefit of you that are not sure of the location, it is at Atwood, west side of U.S. 31, 13 miles south of Charlevoix, overlooking Grand Traverse Bay. It is a beautiful 18 hole golf course built by Jerry Matthews and one of his finest. It is so well thought of that qualifying rounds for the Michigan Amateur, are played there. Considerable thought has been given to moving the tournament there in the future.

Robert McElheny is golf course superintendent of Antrim Dells and he asked that we extend an invitation to play this beautiful layout. Mr. & Mrs. John Smith are the owners and co-hosts, they therefore hope that you will enjoy every minute there. Starting times are necessary and you can get them by phoning 616/599-2679. It is suggested that you also make reservations for a cart and the price for carts will be \$7.50 per person. If you desire lunch, it is available at the club house overlooking Traverse Bay. A block of starting times has been set aside for the period 12:00 Noon thru 1:30 P.M.

"Happy Hour" will be at the club house therefore those coming to spend the day or play golf, may we suggest that you arrange your time to be at the "BAVARIAN INN" in time for dinner at 6:15 P. M. You will pass the Bavarian Inn as you come into the drive to the clubhouse, so be on the lookout. This restaurant is famous for their Bavarian food and it should be a real treat. Those coming just for the meeting, please schedule your arrival at the place where the meeting will be held.

Our speaker for the evening will be one of our own members, who is superintendent of three military golf courses in Hawaii, Mr. Walter Nagorski. Walter has put together one of the finest slide presentations of golf courses in Hawaii plus has included many ways that things are done differently in the islands. Walter has had great success constructing greens completely out of man made sand and will have the slides to prove it. The only problem after seeing them is that all our members will want to go to the Islands. It should be real interesting and every effort should be made to be present.

Now the usual question, how many of you will be present? We must advise the Bavarian Inn of the count for dinner. The usual postcard is enclosed, please take a moment and return it immediately. A prize is given each meeting to someone that returns postcards and you do not have to be present to win so please get that card on its way back to your editor. We thank you for your cooperation.

October 5th, is our next meeting at Michawye Hills however there are two other important dates that should be on your calendar. Sept. 1, Field Day at M.S.U. and Sept. 20th, M.S.U. Seminar at T.C. Country Club. All three dates are important.

Overseeding Bentgrass Greens — Is It Worth It?

by BRIAN SILVA

Agronomist, Northeastern Region, USGA Green Section

I TRIED THAT a couple of years ago and didn't see any results." Unfortunately, that's often the response to a suggestion for annually overseeding bentgrass to bentgrass greens. But remember, "one summer a seeding does not make." On closer examination, the long-term possibilities for green improvement and eventual success should not be even slightly overlooked.

There are many advantages to overseeding greens. Improved color, putting speed, shot-holding capability, as well as rapid recovery from injury are among the leading ones. Add to these the factors of increased uniformity and consistency of putting surfaces and a formidable, favorable argument begins to take shape.

Putting greens that have become a patchwork quilt of different bentgrasses and *Poa annua* varieties pose an unusual problem for the golf course superintendent. The various grasses and types respond differently to basic management practices, such as fertilization, topdressing, vertical mowing, and even pesticide applications. A variable response to environmental factors such as temperature is also noted. An annual overseeding program would encourage the development of greater uniformity with regard to the grass species and variety which predominates on a putting surface.

We often ask the impossible of greens originally planted to bentgrass. In many instances, these greens receive no additional desirable seed after they become established. This is the case even though annual bluegrass consistently produces vast quantities of new seed each season. Expecting the existing bentgrasses to compete solely on a vegetative basis with annual bluegrass may be expecting far too much. A vigorous annual bentgrass overseeding program can play an integral role in a maintenance scheme designed to favor the growth and development of bent and at the expense of *Poa annua* encroachment.

While many superintendents appreciate the advantages associated with annual overseeding, many of them hesitate to introduce still another variety into their putting greens. This is especially true on greens originally planted to velvet bentgrass or vegetative creeping bentgrasses such as Arlington and Congressional. However, close examination of greens originally planted to these specific grasses often reveals a less-than-claimed degree of purity. For example, many velvet bent greens often contain as much creeping bentgrass and annual bluegrass as they do velvet bent. Additionally, many greens planted vegetatively to two or more strains of creeping bentgrass have suffered separation and take on the patchwork appearance mentioned earlier. An overseeding program would provide a blending of grasses and greater uniformity of putting surfaces. Just as importantly, proper maintenance practices will yield more consistent and predictable results.

By now you are probably ready to jump on the bandwagon and wave the banner for annual bentgrass overseeding. Right? Wait a minute! Certain questions and techniques first merit your attention.

ONE OF THE keys to good germination from any seeding program is the development of proper seed to soil contact. On a new green, or on a project where complete renovation is in order, the development of excellent seed-to-soil contact is achieved with relative ease. However, when overseeding is carried out on an area of actively growing turf, the seed-to-soil contact becomes more difficult.

Any one of a number of techniques, or a combination of them, will work. If you are dead serious about a bentgrass overseeding program, consider first the use of a small, power-driven slicer-seeding machine that places the seed slightly below the putting surface. Special thin colters are available that

barely disturb the surface. Very successful results have been obtained with this technique.

Soil cultivation, i.e., aerification, is another frequently used practice in gaining seed/soil contact. The soil cores should be removed and a drop seeder used for the sowing. Follow this with a moderate topdressing of desirable quality and then slowly mat or drag the material into the open aeration holes. *Slow* dragging is far preferable to the racetrack technique, and it doesn't disturb the original putting surface as much.

Depending on the time you have available and the prevailing weather conditions, you may wish to carry out a moderate vertical mowing program immediately after removing the soil cores as mentioned above. The vertical mowing should be carried out to a depth which will bring a small amount of previously applied topdressing or soil material to the surface of the greens. After removal of the thatch debris and/or soil material brought to the surface, the holes resulting from aerification and the slight grooves caused by vertical mowing will allow an infinite number of seeds to make good soil contact.

Spiking or slicing greens with mechanical disk spikes will also produce a good seedbed for overseeding. It will require at least three or four passes over the putting green — more if possible — before actual seeding is accomplished.

Remember, overseeding is taking place on actively growing turf. This allows less than optimal conditions for germination and the growth and development of new seedlings. An intensive soil cultivation program, combining aerification, vertical mowing, and spiking will prepare a better seedbed and reduce the level of competition imposed by actively growing turf. The relatively moderate topdressing which follows overseeding will permit acceptable putting conditions. Once the seed is in the ground, very light syringings for two or three weeks throughout each day will aid in higher germination percentages.

AS TO THE seed itself, one of the improved creeping bentgrass varieties is recommended. Penneagle or Penncross would represent a good choice, because they have an aggressive growth rate, which allows them to germinate and develop under less than ideal seedbed conditions. Once established, their aggressive nature will offer an increased level of competition against the ever-present annual bluegrass.

Much has been made of the tendency for such aggressively growing grasses to thatch and become puffy under putting green conditions. However, contemporary putting green maintenance practices, including light and frequent topdressing, light vertical mowing, and judicious use of nitrogen, will keep thatch accumulation in check.

Obviously, seedling mortality will be high. While the chances of overseeding success increase with the intensity of seedbed preparation, relatively high seeding rates should be used. Additionally, if you wish to shorten the time for higher bentgrass populations, overseed twice annually. Minimum seeding rates of two pounds per 1,000 square feet for the grasses suggested above are recommended. On a golf course with average-size greens, this seeding rate means an expenditure in excess of \$1,000 per seeding per year. Just for a minute, though, consider the expense involved in maintaining greens through the summer stress period that are comprised mainly of annual bluegrass. The extra syringing and fungicide treatments add up quickly, and substantially. Better yet, imagine the cost in actual dollars and inconvenience associated with a set of greens that come through a winter in poor shape after annual bluegrass has exhibited its all too famous susceptibility to winter injury.

The timing of overseeding is critically important. While spring and fall might be the accepted times for propagating turf on a new site by seeding, they are not the best times for overseeding existing turf. Cool soil temperatures in the spring and fall, plus extreme competition on the part of annual bluegrass, render these periods inappropriate for overseeding. Carried out in the summertime, however, before the prime germination period for *Poa annua*, overseeding can give bentgrass seedlings an increased level of competitive ability. Soil temperatures at this time will also allow excellent germination, while diligent irrigation and fungicide treatments can improve seedling survival.

THE IDEAS behind overseeding sound great. Conditions of surface uniformity and consistency on greens can be improved. Greater competition on behalf of the desirable grasses can be gained against the encroachment of annual bluegrass. However, these results will never be realized by a one-shot effort.

A sound overseeding program must be carried out on a continuing and annual basis. Frequently we are asked how long the program should last. Is three years enough? Is five years too long? The best answer seems to be to initiate and continue an annual overseeding program as long as it is necessary to keep bentgrass in the dominant role. This may well take many, many years, but then in agriculture, only crop failure comes about overnight.

And you can count on one more fact. The results gained from overseeding

will not be immediate. Three or four years may be required before you even see a hint of progress. However, if you persevere, you will improve bentgrass populations and uniformity throughout your putting surfaces. Without annual overseeding, your present putting surfaces will, at best, remain static. The more desirable grasses will be competing on a vegetative basis and, generally speaking, this is a losing proposition. Expect annual bluegrass encroachment. In many cases, the initiation of overseeding will challenge a distorted equilibrium that has developed over the years and favors annual bluegrass populations. It will take time to shift this equilibrium, but a shift will surely take place through overseeding and altered maintenance practices.

If you are attracted by greens dominated by creeping bentgrasses, an annual overseeding program deserves your further investigation.

One of the best ways to overseed bentgrass into a "bentgrass" green.



YOU CAN HELP IN FUND RAISING

The following is a letter from Dr. Fred V. Grau, President of The Musser Foundation. Dr. Grau's idea for raising funds for turfgrass research is a very easy way for many of us to participate in this effort. The only work involved for you is a little salesmanship on your part to convince your golf course or club to participate. If you can do it, please contact Dr. Grau at the address listed.

Dear Colleague:

Golf course superintendents have the rare opportunity to be the No. 1 fund raisers in the nation for turf research. The plan is simple and uncomplicated. It conflicts with no other fund-raising plan.

Among the millions of golfers, there are those who rarely get the chance to play on a fine course. Many would be glad to pay a fee for the opportunity. Many private clubs are closed on Mondays.

A request from the superintendent, backed by the pro, made to the Board of Directors through channels, would result in many clubs opening the course for one afternoon (or a day) to non-member golfers for a fee. It would not be a tournament. There would be no frills, no food - just golf. Arrangements and publicity (invitations) would be wholly in the capable hands of the superintendent and the pro. They would set the fee and collect the money.

No cost to the club would be incurred. The superintendent and the pro would be doing their regular jobs. It could be an opportunity for concerned club members to play with paying guests. All should be informed that the urgent reason in back of fund raising is that research funds at experiment stations are drying up. Budgets have been slashed severely. Turf research is at the crossroads.

The benefits of the research projects funded by this plan are many. Here are a few:

The club can expect Better Turf at a lower cost.

1983 TURFGRASS FIELD DAY

Thursday, September 1, 1983

HANCOCK TURFGRASS RESEARCH CENTER

Intersection of Farm Lane and Mt. Hope Roads
on the campus of Michigan State University

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- 1) Growth regulators for highway grasses
- 2) Yellow patch disease
- 3) Nitrogen carriers on Kentucky bluegrass
- 4) Ryegrass cultivar evaluations
- 5) Irrigation practices and disease management
- 6) Clipping removal from annual bluegrass turf
- 7) A microprocessor for predicting Anthracnose on annual bluegrass
- 8) Pre and postemergence control of crabgrass
- 9) Shatter core aerification
- 10) Dollar spot fungicide tests
- 11) Dormant fertility and nitrogen carriers on bentgrass
- 12) Yellow tuft disease
- 13) Gaeumannomyces patch
- 14) Evaluation of turfgrass varieties for use in Michigan

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 9:00 A.M. | Registration and coffee |
| 9:30 A.M. | Introductions - Dr. B.E. Branham, Moderator
Welcoming Comments - Dr. James H. Anderson, Dean,
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
Gerald L. Faubel, President, Michigan Turfgrass
Foundation |
| 10:00 A.M. | Field tour of research plots |
| 12:30 P.M. | Adjourn |

Members can look for Better Lawns around their homes.

Members children can expect fewer sports-related injuries by virtue of Better Turf on the playing fields.

Biological control of pests will be investigated.

The superintendent and the pro would be responsible for collecting the fees and sending the money to:

Dr. Fred V. Grau, President
The Musser Foundation
P.O. Box AA
College Park, Md. 20740-1014
Telephone (301) 864-0090

The money preferably would be sent in the form of a single check.

The money would go at once to our treasurer to be invested in high-yield safe securities for maximum sustained income which will be used to encourage and support graduate students doing turf research under competent supervision. Graduate students are security for the future of turf. The Musser Foundation is dedicated to this concept.

Projects in which the Musser Foundation have been involved financially through grants to graduate students include;

Control of the black turfgrass ateniensis. Ohio Etiology of Fusarium on bluegrass. New York Microclimate in turfgrass. Pennsylvania The physiology of water stress and drought tolerance in turfgrass. Texas A&M. Many other urgent projects await investigation.

Sincerely yours,
For Better Turf,
Fred V. Grau, President

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S PUBLIC RELATION PROGRAM

Superintendents today are in a mixed-up critical period! Members are more critical than in the past. They play golf courses throughout the world and compare your course to the finest in existence. No two courses are the same; their budgets vary; soil conditions differ; the amount of play also varies. On a given day a course may be beautiful and less than desirable a few days later; yet your course is compared to other courses when they may be at their best.

Some weeks ago I was discussing the subject of public relations with Bruce Williams of Bob-O-Link Golf Club. Bruce stated that there are several aspects to public relations. Relationships with the Golf Course Superintendent and the Pro, the Club Manager and the Greens Chairman. Relationships with the Greens Committee, the membership, the City Fathers and with distributors and manufacturers.

Development of favorable atmosphere with employees and last but not least, relationships with the Golf Course Superintendent's Association and Universities. The old adage that "no chain is stronger than its weakest link" is true of a Golf Course Superintendent's image. All factors must be kept high! The best line of offense is a beautiful golf course. This is a must! Yet, all of you have seen Golf Course Superintendents fired even though their golf course was in perfect condition. It is imperative that superintendents and the pro know each other's schedule of important events. The pro needs to know when you plan to aerify. He is in constant touch with the membership. This is also necessary information for the General Manager and the Green Chairman. Doing thoughtful favors for the pro will pay dividends!

The superintendent needs to communicate with the members. Some superintendents write a newsletter; others post important activities on the bulletin board in the club house. The manager and the green chairman can act as a buffer between you and the membership if they are aware of your program. Lyn Hazlett, late superintendent of the Country Club of Cleveland, posted pictures under glass on the first tee showing how the course would be when a Poa annua removal program was in progress.

Greens members should understand your program and the desired results. Regular communication with the group is desirable with both formal and informal meetings.

Superintendents are faced with the possibility of valuable tools - fertilizers and pesticides - being deleted from the market-place. We need to act together to prevent this disaster! In 1970 seven pesticides were being banned in New York State. Mel Lucas, past President of GCSAA, with the aid of the National Association, was able to defend pesticides and keep them on the market.

The superintendent must maintain a beautiful golf course. He must understand the principles of soil, management, irrigation, budgets, and landscaping. Needed information can be obtained by attending seminars, GCSA meetings, and working closely with University experts.

One of the greatest enemies of the golf course is compaction - thatch - lack of air resulting in poor water penetration. This results in poor plant growth subject to disease. We must follow a program of aerification. Bruce Searing, Superintendent of Glenview Club, has taken a unique attack by aerifying his fairways with a greens aloe.

We need to prevent resistance of fungicides by constant rotation of fungicides. Rotating among products such as Duosan, Chipco 26019, Fungo 50, Bayleton and Acti-dione. This is important because EPA agencies are still thick with venom against chemistry. The only source of chemicals are spin-offs from chemicals from farm crops developed in Europe.

Working closely with Universities has been demonstrated with dedicated, thinking superintendents such as Dudley Smith, working with Dr. Couch and other researchers attempting to solve the C-15 problem.

Superintendents need to work closely with competent distributor salesmen, such as John Lebedeus, Jim Reed, Don Spier, Jerry Adank and Rick Johnson. There are many other competent salesmen including Steve Stewart and Wayne Trometer. Superintendents need the technical service, immediate delivery, adequate inventory from educated, responsible salesmen. If the needs of the superintendent are met, suppliers are entitled to a reasonable profit. Buying from the lowest bidder does not save the superintendent job.

It is important that employees are recognized as important people. James John, superintendent of Northmoor Country Club, has made attractive rustic name plates identifying each employee's parking space.

The superintendent should train and delegate responsibility to his assistant. Mike Bavier, superintendent of Inverness Golf Course, is fortunate to have a competent assistant in Mike Vogt to share management while he is leading our National organization; however, the price tag of management freedom is responsibility. This is a trait that employees must develop.

A well-maintained shop can create a favorable image. The most efficient and neatly organized shop I have ever seen is John Ebel's shop at Barrington Hills Country Club. This is public relations at its best!

Golf Course Superintendents should not bury their head under a bushel basket, but tell the story of their profession to Rotary Clubs, Chamber of Commerce; newspapers, television and radio. Let the community know what you are doing. Yours is a professional occupation.

The superintendent should maintain a beautiful landscaped image throughout the course from the entrance, to the Club House, from the tee to greens.

Harold Frederickson, superintendent Edgewood Valley Country Club, effectively uses bedding plants throughout his fine course. His sandtraps are attractively edged. Warren Bidwell, Superintendent Olympia Fields, has always maintained beautiful tulip beds in front of the Club House. Beauty has been Warren Bidwell's trademark!

In order to insure a sound public relations program; superintendents should maintain desirable relationships among the managers, pros, employees, green committee, membership, community, golf course superintendents, distributors, manufacturers and universities. These relationships will provide a climate of Professionalism that will build a fine total program.

**Cecil F. Kerr
Mallencrodt Inc.**

Credit: "The Bull Sheet" Nov. 1981, Vol. 35 No. 6

A business executive's wife, downtown to do some shopping, walked into his office unexpectedly. And there he sat with his secretary on his lap.

Without hesitation, he dictated: "Gentlemen: shortage or no shortage, I cannot conduct the affairs of my office any longer with just one chair."

We are looking for meeting locations for 1984. If you and your club would like to host a meeting next year, will you please contact "Tuck" Tate so that your invite will get deep consideration. If you feel so inclined, please check with your people and bring definite information as to the day of the week, the month or months that would be most suitable and we will try to accept your invite. We would like to have scheduled by our October 5th meeting, all the locations for 1984. Please check with your people now and advise. Thanks.

Rumor has it that the date of our fall social party will be Oct. 22nd. This is the party for the gals, presents have been bought, so you gals that are interested in being there, may we suggest that you start your party plans, NOW.

The Annual Meeting of this Association will be at the September meeting. At this time, we will elect new directors to the Board. At this election, only Class "A" and "B" members will be voting. All other classifications of membership do not qualify. Any member who has not paid 1983 dues, is legally not a member and therefore will not be allowed to vote. If you have not paid your 1983 dues, please do so before September 14, to our Sec.-Treas. Frank Heminger.

Our nominating committee, chaired by Mike Garvale with Tom Reed and Bob Rieschl has come up with a slate of nominees for your pleasure. Three of those elected will serve a 3 year term and one will serve out the term of M. Jos. Yoder or a 1 year term. They are

Tom Courtemanche, Green Hills Golf Club
Damian Kurkowski, Gaylord Country Club
Dave Longfield, Garland Golf Club
Bob Rieschl, Crystal Lake Country Club
Erich Sleder, Elmbrook Golf Club
Steven White, Traverse City Country Club

One Class "G" member will be elected to the Board bringing our total to 11 Board members. These Board members will serve a 2 year term and the nominating committee has the following candidates for your pleasure:

Jim Bogart, O.M. Scott & Sons
Robert E. Miller, Acme Maintenance Co.
Jim Vince, Century Supply Co.

Officers for the year 1984 will be elected by the new Board, at the October meeting and will serve a term of office of one year.

Mr. Frank Heminger and Mr. Claude Marcus are retiring from the Board. Both have given much of their time and effort on behalf of our Association. We are most grateful for their support, contributions and help during their tenure and everyone appreciates their input, for a job well done.

Nominations can be made on the floor at the meeting for either office. There is one suggestion on voting, since we are from all parts of the northern part of Michigan, we should on the Board have representation from all parts of the area that we represent. Every voting member should try to be present at this meeting to make our Association be represented by the majority of its members and not just a few.

Next meeting, October 5th, Michawye Hills, Gaylord, Dr. Jos. Vargas will be the speaker.