

# Letters to Editor

Dr. Peter Hayes director of the S.T.R.I. says . . .

I am writing to complain about an article presented in "Golf Greenkeeping" February 1988 entitled 'The Continuing Saga of *Poa annua*'.

First of all, I wish to say that I have a very high regard for Stanley Zontek and what he states in his article is applicable to the United States. However, the first part of this article concerning chemical control is completely inappropriate to the British situation. I note on Page 13 that you have an important warning, however all the chemicals mentioned, other than mefluidide, are not sold on the British market and, what is more, it is *illegal to use them* under the present Government regulations as there are no turf recommendations on any of these products.

The first section dealing with chemical control, i.e. the use of Arsenical compounds, the use of Prograss, Cutless, Rubigan and the very dangerous recommendation on the use of Roundup, paraquat and simazine to control *Poa annua* on Bermudagrass, is not applicable whatsoever to the British situation of fescue/bent greens. The recommendation for Embark, which is sold as Mowchem in Britain, is the only part which is applicable and, certainly, May & Baker do not recommend it for the control of *Poa annua* on their label. Bensulide, Dacthal, Balan, Pendimethalin and Endothal are not recommended for turf use in Britain, and therefore the whole first two pages of this article are inapplicable and, what is more, dangerous to include in an article in Britain.

The second part of the article entitled 'Management' is certainly of value and should be included in any article on *Poa annua*.

Although you have included warnings, Pages 12 and 13 are inapplicable to the British turf scene. What is more, I feel that the first part of this article should not have been published as all the chemicals mentioned are not recommended for turf use in Britain, and therefore you should state this more clearly in your article.

Yours sincerely,  
Peter Hayes,

## Editors Comment

The article to which Dr. Hayes refers was first published in the *USGA Green Section Record*, a bi-monthly publication from the Agronomy Division of the United States Golf Association, circulated to all subscriber golf clubs in the USA.

The author, Stanley Zontek, the Director of the Mid-Atlantic Region, described the research taking place with chemicals in the control of *Poa Annua*, not necessarily recommending their use. In case some readers might have decided to experiment themselves we made a particular point of highlighting in a red tinted box the restrictions on Arsenical Compounds and the fact that even if certain chemicals are available they may not have been cleared by the Ministry of Agriculture. Dr. Hayes' interest is much appreciated and his letter is printed in full, though we cannot agree to his suggestion that the chemical aspect should not have been published. Chemicals are still used extensively to control vegetation, though their use is subjected to increasing restriction particularly in Europe. Until we adopt universal organic husbandry, if chemical control is a subject for discussion, then greenkeepers are entitled to read about it.

I see in the Greenkeeping press that the R & A has pledged £250,000 support to the S.T.R.I. at Bingley to investigate the fertilizer and irrigation needs of British golf greens.

Does this mean that the R & A have decided that this is the problem? Does this mean that the advice to date from the S.T.R.I. on these matters has been wrong or/and unfounded, or not even researched? Who advises the R & A on these matters?

Will this news make golf clubs paying for this advice, in good faith and coin, reconsider their position? How many greenkeepers have lost their jobs, and in some cases their health, on the 'say so' of these so called advisers?

Who is going to take the final responsibility for the condition of British golf greens?

S.L. Farrington  
Course Manager Frilford Heath Golf Club. Abingdon, Oxford.

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